

Moscow might accept Germany in NATO

MOSCOW (R) — East German Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere said Sunday the Soviet Union may be prepared to accept North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) membership for a united Germany if the Western alliance made strategic and structural changes. De Maiziere said after meeting President Mikhail Gorbachev that the Kremlin leader indicated he would be prepared to discuss German membership of the NATO once "new structures and strategies are in place." On his first foreign trip since becoming prime minister this month after the March 18 elections, de Maiziere said that he, too, agreed with Gorbachev that a shift towards a more defensive and political status for NATO was necessary. But he made clear that the two sides had not gone into detail on what this would mean in practice, suggesting that the gap between them was still wide ahead of next weekend's international talks in Bonn on Germany's military future.

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Arafat in Libya

NICOSIA (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat flew to Libya Sunday as part of a tour to canvass support for an emergency Arab summit to discuss the exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel. The Libyan news agency JANA said the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief flew to the northwestern city of Sirte, where Libya was marking the 75th anniversary of a battle against Italian occupation troops. Arafat arrived after visiting Somalia and Sudan. In Khartoum, military leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir supported Arafat's call for the summit. Arab League officials said last week that the majority of the league's 22 members were in favour of the summit which the PLO chief had proposed to be held in Iraq next month.

Turkey seizes pipes bound for Iraq

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish customs officials said Sunday they had seized two more truckloads of steel pipes they suspected might be components for the Iraqi arms industry. They said two Iraq-bound trucks were being held at Turkey's Kapikule border with Bulgaria while investigations were underway. Another lorry was seized last week. "The lorries are being held here at the border gate. They are loaded with steel pipes," said a customs official, adding that experts would examine the pipes to see if they had military applications.

Discovery lands after record mission

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE (R) — The space shuttle Discovery landed safely Sunday after setting a space record and braving high winds which threatened to delay its touchdown. During its five-day mission, Discovery launched the hubble space telescope which scientists hope will be able to look back 20 billion years, almost to the beginning of the universe. In order to complete the telescope launch, Discovery's five-person crew took their craft into an orbit 610 kilometres above the Earth's surface, higher than any of the previous 34 shuttle flights and higher than any planned flights.

Romanians stage anti-regime protests

TIMISOARA, Romania (R) — Thousands of angry demonstrators staged anti-government rallies in at least four Romanian towns Sunday to demand the ousting of interim President Ion Iliescu. About 15,000 people in the western city of Timisoara, birthplace of the December uprising which ousted dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, denounced Iliescu and the ruling National Salvation Front (NSF) as neo-communists. Protests have swelled over the past week ahead of the country's first free elections for more than half a century on May 20 in which Iliescu is running for president as the front's candidate.

Genscher nearly faints during speech

DUESSELDORF (AP) — West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher became faint Sunday and had to break off a speech at a gathering of his political party, Genscher, 63, has a long history of circulatory system and urinary tract problems and once suffered a heart attack. "My dear friends, unfortunately I must stop," said Genscher about 10 minutes into his speech. Three doctors at the gathering rushed to his aid. A few minutes later, Genscher's spokesman said the foreign minister was merely suffering from exhaustion. About 30 minutes later, Genscher returned to the podium as members of the Free Democrat Party gave him a standing ovation.

IRA claims border bombings

BELFAST (AP) — A bomb exploded at a border customs post Sunday, and security forces tipped to a renewed Irish Republican Army (IRA) offensive were on heightened alert throughout Northern Ireland. The Royal Ulster Constabulary said a bomb caused minor damage to a hut in the customs complex near Newry, County Down, on the border with the Irish Republic.

Jordan stands ready to seize opportunity for peace

Crown Prince warns of diminishing peace prospects in Mideast

Unless peace prevails there will be a fanatical war

By Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has warned that chances for genuine and lasting peace in the Middle East are quickly diminishing and called on Israel to seize the "unprecedented opportunity" that exists today to reach a political settlement with the Arab World in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill.

E. Beirut skirmishes continue

BEIRUT (AP) — Rebel General Michel Aoun's troops and militia-men of the right-wing Lebanese Forces militia skirmished in east Beirut, Sunday, but a 33-hour ceasefire between the Christian rivals held in the mountains.

There were no reports of casualties Sunday in the three-month-old power struggle for mastery of the Christian enclave north of Beirut. At least 919 people have been killed and 2,442 wounded since fighting erupted Jan. 30 when Aoun moved against the militia led by Samir Geagea, the main challenger to his claim to be the enclave's overlord.

The ceasefire in the Kesrouan mountains on the eastern edge of the 800-square kilometre enclave took effect at 9 a.m. (0700 GMT) Saturday. It is scheduled to end at 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) Sunday.

The truce was mediated by a Maronite Catholic monk, Bulos Naaman, a member of a three-man committee of neutral Christians which has negotiated several earlier ceasefires in the confrontation between Aoun and Geagea.

The ceasefire was called primarily to allow residents of the disputed resorts of Daraya and Kleiat in the Kesrouan mountains to return to the devastated towns to salvage what they can of their homes. Hundreds of refugees poured into the towns Sunday while the ceasefire held, police reported. Daraya has been deserted by almost all its 12,000 citizens and barely 200 of Kleiat's 20,000 population remain huddled in basements and underground shelters.

Police said the few remaining civilians still in the two resorts took advantage of the truce to leave before an expected resumption of fighting.

the nation-state, a war of attrition that aims to reduce national entities to their components." (The article appeared in the April 28/29 issue of the newspaper. It is reprinted in full on page 4).

In the article, the Crown Prince said that "Jordan, like other fair-minded Arab states, stands ready to welcome a new wave of immigration from the Soviet Union to Israel in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill," and "... believes that for the peace process to succeed, both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation should offer practical options to their peoples."

"Jordan is committed to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The most appropriate vehicle for achieving this is an international conference under United Nations auspices."

"Regrettably, Israel has not joined in the spirit of accommodation," he wrote. "Instead, it has chosen to shift attention from the critical issue of peace — this time, to gather all its resources to welcome a new wave of immigration from the Soviet Union to Israel in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill."

The Crown Prince called on the U.S., the Soviet Union and Europe as well as all parties involved in the Middle East conflict to work in concert to generate momentum for peace.

"Since the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories violate international law, the United States and European nations should predicate their subsidisation of the immigration and resettlement of Soviet Jews on Israel's freeing all settlement activity in the occupied territories," the Crown Prince wrote. "They can do much to ameliorate this difficult situation by increasing annual quotas for Soviet Jews to settle in their own countries."

Israeli army keeps Gaza Strip under tight siege

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Israeli army kept the Gaza Strip sealed off and confined the 750,000 Palestinian residents to their homes Sunday while the Jewish state observed two holidays.

Sirens wailed and Israelis paused for a minute of silence Saturday night as a memorial day to fallen soldiers officially began. The blanket curfew was aimed at preventing protests.

The closure came after the bloodiest week of Israeli-Palestinian clashes this year. On Thursday troops killed four Palestinians and wounded 150 in the occupied territories, most of them in the Gaza Strip refugee camp of Jabalya.

A large number of red-beretted paratroopers and border police were seen around military cemeteries in East Jerusalem. Reporters said the army had also erected roadblocks in the West Bank and prevented Palestinians from entering Israel.

The military said soldiers at the roadblocks were carrying out selective checks to prevent "possible incursions" from entering Israel.

In the West Bank town of Al Bireh, 12 kilometres north of Jerusalem, Zuhair Ijl, 44, was mortally wounded in the head when masked assailants opened fire at him.

Ijl was standing near his butcher shop in the town's market when he was shot. His assailants then stabbed him, eyewitnesses said.

Reporters said Ijl was an informant who had openly repented at the beginning of the Palestinian revolt. They said residents believed Ijl had renewed his contacts with the Israeli authorities a few months ago.

The army declared the town a closed military area and troops searched for the assailants, the military command said. Meanwhile, Christian leaders threatened to shut churches and shrines in the Holy land once again if Jewish settlers remain in the Christian quarter of the Old City.

Shamir attacks Baker plan; new settlements said planned

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Right-wing Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Sunday progress towards peace negotiations did not depend on agreeing to U.S. terms for Palestinian-Israeli peace talks.

Also Sunday, the leftist daily Al Hamishmar reported that Shamir's settlement aide, Michael Dekel, was preparing plans for the speedy construction of two other settlements in the occupied West Bank. It said the settlements had yet to be approved by the government.

Israeli-U.S. relations have been strained by Shamir's refusal to accept U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's proposals for peace talks and by recent settlement activity in occupied Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.



"I have to say that there is something perhaps ridiculous in the slogan of 'yes to Baker,' Shamir said in an Israel Radio interview.

Mubarak visits Syria Wednesday

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will visit Syria Wednesday to seal the end of years of bitterness between Cairo and Damascus, presidential sources said Sunday.

Mubarak and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad are expected to explore ways of boosting bilateral ties and expand trade and to discuss the mass emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. Arab media also predict that Mubarak will seek ways to reconcile Syria with Iraq.

Mubarak is expected to hold a day of talks with Assad Wednesday and may spend the night in Syria, the sources said. The formal breach between Syria and Egypt dates from 1977, when Mubarak's predecessor, Anwar Sadat, opened contacts that led to an Egyptian peace treaty with Israel.

Compromise signs seen in Lithuania

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The Soviet Union unexpectedly eased part of its economic blockade against Lithuania, almost doubling the amount of natural gas flowing into the Baltic republic, Lithuania said.

Residents of the Baltic republic that declared its independence March 11 organised a bicycle rally to show their defiance of the Kremlin's decision to shut off oil supplies. They planned a republic-wide staging of Beethoven's 9th symphony as a symbol of hope and human freedom.

Announcement of the sudden easing of the gas restriction came as both President Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania and a spokesman for Mikhail Gorbachev praised a proposed compromise to their dispute offered by France and West Germany.

Soviet, Syrian leaders assail U.S. policy

Gorbachev cites Arab rights not just human rights in handling problem linked to Jewish exodus

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev has said that problems caused by Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel must be solved in the context of "the rights of the Arabs and not just of human rights in general."

The Soviet leader was also quoted as voicing concern over Israeli possession of nuclear weapons and attacking American policy as an obstacle to peace in the Middle East.



According to the Soviet News Agency, TASS, Gorbachev, in talks in Moscow with visiting Syrian President Hafez Al Assad late Saturday, rejected "inventions" circulating in some Arab countries that Moscow had a secret deal with Washington on Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union, TASS reported.

TASS said the Soviet Union wanted closer contacts with Arab states over Israel's "illegal" activities in settling Jewish immigrants in the occupied territories and wanted the United Nations Security Council to take a stand against "the colonisation of these lands."

It was the first formal comment by Gorbachev on Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel and expressed Arab fears that the bulk of the new arrivals could be settled in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Moscow has resisted Arab calls to ban further Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel, arguing that its international commitments on human rights made it impossible for it to prevent Jews leaving for Israel.

Kidnappers say another hostage to be released

BEIRUT (AP) — Kidnappers holding American hostage Frank Herbert Reed said Sunday they will release the captive within 48 hours.

An unsigned two-line statement said Reed, kidnapped near Beirut airport while being driven by his chauffeur to the golf club, was in a dark blue Volvo interpreted his car and seized him and the driver, who later was released.

The statement, typewritten in Arabic, was delivered anonymously to the offices of the independent newspaper Al Nahar 6:30 p.m. (1630 GMT).

Another copy went to a Western news agency, and both texts were accompanied by photographs of the 57-year-old hostage, a native of Malden, Massachusetts, to prove authenticity. The statement said: "In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate," "We have decided to free American hostage Frank Reed within 48 hours. He will carry a message addressed to the American administration."

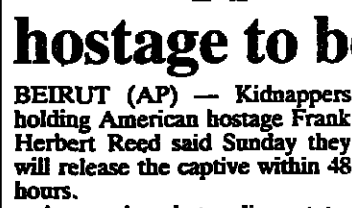
'Israel unprepared for missile threat'

TEL AVIV (R) — The highest official in the defence ministry says Israel is unprepared for an Arab missile attack and would suffer permanent damage to morale if its cities were hit. In an interview with the mass-circulation Yedioth Ahronoth published Sunday, director-general David Ivri said Israel's position had worsened with Iraq's development of medium-range missiles and chemical warheads. "Are we as a state and as a people ready for this challenge and able to deal with it? In my opinion, no. No politically, no strategically and no as an army," he said. "The problem is not if there are 100 or 200 casualties... what happens afterward... how would the Jews in Israel react to such an attack and its effects... even if they are limited? Even if only a few missiles fell on Tel Aviv the country's morale or psychology would not be the same again." Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said last month his country had chemical weapons and warned that it would use them if the Jewish state attacked.

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According to TASS, the increased emigration was linked to "internal processes in the Soviet Union, with certain undesirable phenomena in inter-ethnic relations."

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Eritrean rebels report breaking Ethiopian army lines near Asmara

NAIROBI (R) — Ethiopian rebels said they had smashed through government front lines to capture the strategic town of Adi Kayeh, putting more pressure on Asmara, the capital of northern Eritrea province.

Government forces have been fighting to break out of an enclave around Asmara since the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) rebels captured the Red Sea port of Massawa in mid-February and cut off the Soviet-backed government's last overland supply route.

The EPLF said in a broadcast on their clandestine radio that they seized Adi Kayeh, a district headquarters 110 kilometres southeast of Asmara, Wednesday.

The broadcast, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Saturday, said the EPLF "annihilated" government forces but gave no casualty figures.

The rebels said they also "wiped out" government troops around Senafe, 10 kilometres south of Adi Kayeh.

On Saturday, a presidential advisory body in Addis Ababa said the EPLF had opened a new front in southern Eritrea with the help of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

The EPLF, which is seeking the independence of Eritrea, a former Italian colony, and the TPLF, which is fighting from its base in Tigray province to establish a broader-based government in Ethiopia, both denied Saturday that TPLF troops had entered Eritrea.

British firm in line for Iran aircraft contract, magazine says

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran is negotiating with a British company, Lucas Aerospace, for a \$400 million contract to overhaul its military and civilian Boeing 747s, Flight International magazine reports.

The London-based weekly said in its latest edition, which will be on news stands Monday, that the U.S. and British governments were understood to have approved the deal which was expected to be signed soon.

The magazine reported that at one point in the negotiations that began in January an Israeli company was involved.

But it was dropped because Lucas decided it would be "politically disastrous" if the Israeli involvement ever became known.

A copy of the magazine's report was made available to the Associated Press in Cyprus.

The magazine said that linked to the deal, some aviation consul-

ants "have also been seeking a range of military equipment" for Iran.

Flight said these included U.S.-made Sidewinder air-to-air missiles and spare parts for Iran's American-built F-4, F-5 and F-14 jet fighters and C-130 transport aircraft.

But it reported that Lucas Aerospace denied it was involved in providing military equipment or spares for Iran.

The fighters were among some 450 combat jets Iran bought before the 1979 Islamic revolution that toppled the late Shah Mohammad Pahlavi.

Many were grounded or became non-operational during the 1980-88 war with Iraq amid a chronic lack of spares and weapons systems because of a U.S.-led arms embargo.

Flight said the deal with Iran involves overhauling 16 Boeing 747s and their JT9D-7 engines.

Six of the aircraft are Boeing 747Fs used as military transports by the Iranian Air Force. The rest are operated by Iran Air, the country's flag carrier, which has a fleet of 26 airliners.

Tehran Radio reported last month that the air force's Boeings were being transferred to the civil aviation registry.

Flight said the move was made "in apparent anticipation" that the overhaul deal negotiated by the air force would be signed.

Lucas Aerospace, based at Solihull in the English Midlands, is a major contractor for the U.S. and British Defence Departments. It is part of the Lucas Industries Engineering Group.

Flight identified the Lucas project chief as Stewart Clark, a consultant for the company.

"There is a possibility that we might get the job," Flight quoted Clark as saying.

Iranian official attacked over call for ties with U.S.

NICOSIA (AP) — A recent article in an Iranian newspaper arguing for direct talks with the United States triggered an angry attack by a radical Iranian paper.

The article, entitled "direct talks," had appeared in Thursday's edition of the Farsi-language evening paper, Ettelaat.

The column by Iranian Vice President Atollah Mohajerani Saturday argued that Iran has much to gain by agreeing to direct talks with the United States.

But the daily Jomhuri Islami said Saturday that Mohajerani's argument had "stirred a feeling of disgust among the people and the officials," the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

It noted that the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who founded the Islamic Republic in 1979 by riding on a wave of anti-American sentiment, had preached against any relations with the United States.

Quoting Khomeini, the paper said that "as long as the United States does not come to its senses, Iran will have no relations with it."

"It is mere simple-mindedness to expect the United States to come to its senses," the paper added.

The Iranian agency, monitored in Cyprus, also said the Islamic Association of Tehran University Students has called for a demonstration Sunday to protest against the article.

The association warned that it "will not allow anybody to trifle with the causes of the Islamic revolution," the agency reported.

The Ettelaat article was a bold step by pragmatic Iranian leaders, led by President Hashemi Rafsanjani, to break the taboo of publicly arguing for resumption of ties with Washington.

Rafsanjani has spoken in favour of normalising ties with the West, especially the West European countries. But no high-ranking Iranian official has yet argued that Tehran should re-establish ties with Washington.

The Iranian president also has said repeatedly that Western hostages held by pro-Iranian kidnappers in Lebanon should be freed. Iran is believed to have played a key role in gaining the release of U.S. hostage Robert Pollard a week ago.

Mohajerani noted that the United States, as the most "influential member" of the United Nations Security Council, could pressure Iraq into withdrawing troops from Iranian territory seized in the eight-year Gulf war, and work toward a comprehensive peace.

A U.N.-mediated ceasefire halted the bloody war on Aug. 20, 1988, but talks on troop withdrawal and exchange of prisoners which began five days later have been stalled.

Mohajerani also said that billions of dollars of Tehran's assets, frozen by Washington after Iranian militants stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and took 52 Americans hostage, could be released through direct negotiations with Washington.

Washington broke off ties with Iran after the embassy attack and the Iranians have been implacably anti-American since the beginning of their revolution.

Mohajerani added that other gains from direct talks could be the strengthening of the Iranian military with U.S. help and revitalisation of the economy.

Pope concerned over closure of holy sites

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul II said Sunday he was deeply concerned over tensions between Muslims, Jews and Christians in Jerusalem and appealed for a solution which would respect the rights of all involved.

He was addressing pilgrims in St. Peter's Square following the 24-hour closure Friday of Christian holy sites in Israel and the occupied West Bank in protest at a Jewish settlement in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.

"The serious incidents that have occurred recently in the holy city and that led to the sorrowful

decision to temporarily close holy places, particularly the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, are a cause, also for me, of suffering and profound concern," the Pope said.

"Let us pray that everyone may have close to their hearts the search for solutions inspired by justice and respect for each other's rights."

He prayed for peace in Jerusalem which he said was a city sacred to three religions.

The Vatican has no diplomatic relations with Israel. It wants Jerusalem to be established as an international city sacred to Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

The Holy Sepulchre, the traditional site of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus, is Christianity's holiest shrine.

Its custodian bolted the doors Friday in protest at the settlement of 150 Jews in a church-owned building about 100 metres away.

The Jewish settlement infuriated Christians and Muslims who have protested daily outside the building and clashed with police.

Christian church leaders also closed holy sites in Israel and the occupied West Bank, including the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth.



Pope John Paul

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Bulgaria to restore ties with Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli officials said Sunday that Bulgaria would restore diplomatic relations with Israel this week, the fourth reformed government in East Europe to end a 23-year break in ties. Among Eastern European states, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland have all resumed relations with Israel since September. The Soviet Union and its former East Bloc satellites, with the exception of Romania, severed ties during the 1967 Middle East war. East Germany, Yugoslavia and Albania have yet to establish links with Israel. But East Germany said last week it wants relations. Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will travel to Bulgaria on Wednesday and sign the formal agreement Thursday. Foreign Ministry spokesman Moti Amichai said. Years of Israeli efforts to restore ties with Moscow have so far produced only an exchange of consular delegations but Israelis are encouraged by the new freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews.

Iran executes 4 drug smugglers

NICOSIA (R) — Four drug smugglers were hanged in the southern Iranian provincial capital of Zahedan, the Iranian News Agency IRNA said Sunday. IRNA said the four, executed Saturday, were found guilty of possessing more than 24 kilograms of narcotics, mainly heroin. Iran has executed several thousand narcotics dealers since the 1979 Islamic revolution in a bid to stamp out addiction which afflicts one million of its citizens. The country, with a population of more than 55 million people, lies on a major drug-trafficking route from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Europe.

Floods kill 4 people in Saudi Arabia

DAMMAM, Saudi Arabia (R) — Floods caused by torrential rain swept away a car with 10 people inside in Saudi Arabia, killing at least four of them, a Saudi daily said Sunday. A Medina newspaper said two children, a woman and a man were killed. The other occupants survived. It gave no further details.

'Malta fever' widespread in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Malta fever, a serious bacterial disease transmitted to humans by domestic animals and their products, is widespread in Iraq and could cause severe damage to the country's livestock, the government-run Baghdad Observer daily said Sunday. The English-language newspaper reported that an international conference on the disease known in medical parlance as Brucellosis, ended recently with a call for urgent action to eradicate the disease. Humans can be infected by drinking unpasteurised milk and dairy products or poorly cooked meat. The paper quoted an unidentified source at the conference as saying the disease has reached epidemic proportions in some areas of Iraq. An outbreak of the disease last summer reportedly killed many people in the north and forced the government to ban the sale of milk products in many parts of the country. The authorities have not issued any figures on how many people were stricken by the disease or how many died. But the Baghdad Observer said a recent survey in villages near the northern city of Mosul showed that 10 per cent of the population carried the virus.

Thousands rescued from Somalia floods

MOGADISHU (R) — Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated after massive flooding in normally arid southern Somalia, where scores of villages have been submerged or isolated, officials and relief sources said Sunday. The official Somali News Agency (SONA), quoting Agriculture Minister Mohamed Mohamed Uusow, said Somalia's two main rivers, the Juba and Shebelle, broke their banks in more than 30 places after heavy rain in the neighbouring highlands of Ethiopia. Relief officials told Reuters no one had died in the floods, the most severe in recent history, but tens of thousands of evacuees were without food and shelter. The relief workers said the towns of Gihor, Belet Haim and Afgoi on the Shebelle River, where thousands of Ethiopian refugees live, were the worst hit. They said they feared water-borne diseases such as cholera could sweep through the refugee population. Uusow said that much of the 90-kilometre road running north from the capital Mogadishu to Gihor had been washed away and most communications cut.

Sudan agrees to urgent Arab summit

CAIRO (R) — Sudan's military ruler Omar Hassan Al-Bashir has supported calls for an emergency Arab summit to rally support for Iraq and counter an influx of Soviet Jews into Israel. Bashir spoke to reporters after talks with PLO leader Yasser Arafat who stopped briefly at Khartoum Airport, Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported from the Sudanese capital. Bashir, whose military junta survived a coup attempt earlier this week, was quoted as saying the talks "covered the situation in the occupied Arab territories and Israel's oppressive actions against Palestinians there." According to MENA, Arafat said "The extraordinary Arab summit should take practical measures in

light of developments in the region." The PLO leader had urged Arab heads of state to meet to discuss Soviet Jewish immigration and ways of backing Iraq against what many Arabs see as a hostile Western campaign over its arms industry.

12 killed in gas blast in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Twelve members of two families have been burned to death when a butane gas cylinder exploded at a cemetery in a village at the southern province of Minya, reports in Sunday early editions of Cairo newspapers said. The reports said the victims were making tea while on a visit to deceased relatives Thursday. It said only one member of one of the families, an 11-year-old boy survived but was hospitalised in critical condition. Many Egyptians visit their dead on the first day of religious feasts in accordance to age-old traditions. Some prefer to spend the whole day at cemeteries. While there, they cook and make tea.

Tunisian academic detained

TUNIS (R) — A university professor and Islamic activist has been detained after criticising Tunisian President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali, the Islamic fundamentalist paper Al-Fajr has said. The paper said mathematics Professor Moncef Ben Salem was detained on Interior Ministry premises a week ago after publishing an article in the Algerian fundamentalist movement's paper Al-Moudjahid criticising Ben Ali. In the article he repeated allegations that some of his colleagues were tortured in custody in Tunisia. Tunisian officials have denied the allegations. Ben Salem was a member of an Islamic fundamentalist group, many of whose members were arrested for plotting to overthrow President Habib Bourguiba in November 1987. The group of 160 plotters was released without trial last May by President Ben Ali after he ousted Bourguiba.

Egypt backs Nigeria after coup attempt

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid expressed support Sunday for the West African state of Nigeria and its President Ibrahim Babangida who survived a coup attempt last week. Abdel Meguid said his country was relieved by "the stability in Nigeria after the failed coup attempt. Egypt is keen on seeing security and national unity in that African country under the leadership of President Ibrahim Babangida." Nigeria and Egypt, whose president, Hosni Mubarak, currently chairs the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), traditionally have enjoyed friendly relations. The Nigerian president narrowly escaped an attempt on his life last Monday when rebels attacked his home in a coup attempt that lasted more than 10 hours. Security forces arrested at least 300 people, including soldiers and civilians. The rebels, who took over the national radio station for several hours, accused Babangida of backing a conspiracy by northern Muslims to dominate the largely Christian south.

Soviet executives to visit Cyprus

NICOSIA (AP) — More than 120 senior Soviet executives will attend a special seminar in Cyprus next month to study Western business methods, the Philhellene daily reported Sunday. They will also investigate prospects of setting up joint ventures with Greek Cypriot companies, the top-circulation newspaper said. The seminar is organised jointly by the Cypriot consultancy firm MSCO Ltd and a Soviet organisation, the paper reported. Philhellene quoted MSCO boss Mark Shapians as saying that two earlier seminars were "a great success." He was quoted as saying that "there is a clear need among all the business and state organisations in the Soviet Union for trained executives who will deal with foreign trade." The Cypriot government has an agreement with Moscow to provide technical training and advice on tourism. Cyprus earns more than \$800 million a year in foreign exchange from its booming tourist industry, which last year catered for 1.3 million visitors, mainly Western Europeans.

Burst pipeline pollutes Cyprus coastline

NICOSIA (AP) — A leak from an underwater pipeline linking an oil tanker to shore installations Sunday polluted more than five kilometres of the coastline near the coastal village of Ziggi. Special anti-pollution teams of the government Fisheries Department rushed to the scene, 48 kilometres south of Nicosia, in an effort to contain the spread of the oil slick. The operation was being supervised by the ministers of commerce and natural resources. The spill affected the coastline by the Vassilikio Industrial Estate, the site of cement and chemical factories. The government is anxious to prevent the slick from affecting tourist beaches on either side of the estate which are thronged by thousands of local and foreign visitors every summer. The spill developed a day after a 3-day conference of Mediterranean ministers adopted an action plan designed to prevent further pollution of their sea and to clean up its environment by the year 2025. Spills and leakages from the hundreds of oil tankers plying through the Mediterranean and the illegal cleaning of their tanks were one of the major pollution hazards discussed during the conference.

ANNOUNCEMENT



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PORTS	'BARAZAN' UK066E	'JEBEL ALI' UC066E	'JBN ZAIDOUN' UU060E	'ADDIRIYAH' UT065E	'AL WATTAYAH' UJ065E
NEW YORK	17-Apr	1-May	15-May	29-May	12-Jun
BALTIMORE	19-Apr	3-May	17-May	31-May	14-Jun
NORFOLK	20-Apr	4-May	18-May	1-Jun	15-Jun
SAVANNAH	22-Apr	6-May	20-May	3-Jun	17-Jun
AQABA	13-May	27-May	10-Jun	24-Jun	8-Jul

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children programmes
16:00 News summary in Arabic
16:05 World News
16:15 Local programme
16:40 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Local programmes
22:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO
17:50 French film
18:00 News in French
18:15 Weekly Sport magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Varieties
20:30 Perfect Strangers
21:10 FIFA Soccer
22:40 News in English
22:50 Intimate Contact

PRAYER TIMES

06:22 Fajr
05:47 (Sunat) Dhu
12:33 Dhuhr
14:12 'Asr
19:19 Maghrib
20:44 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifich Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terresanta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Assien International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fair and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh, causing dust at times. In Aqaba, it will be dusty with northerly fresh wind and wavy sea.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Joseph Insish 770560
Dr. Riza Abu Zeinab (-)
Dr. Nabil Al Muhaseb 828252
Dr. Amjad Nawras 781806
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shuacini pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Abu Bakr (-)
Al Shuras pharmacy 983238

AMMAN:
Min./max. temp.
Amman 10 / 21
Aqaba 15 / 30
Desert 0 / 25
Jordan Valley 16 / 29

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 20, Aqaba 29. Humidity readings: Amman 59 per cent, Aqaba 20 per cent.

ZARQA:

Dr. Maysoon Hanna (-)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 139
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787112
Amman Municipality 787112
Telephone Information 121
(directory assistance)
Overseas Calls 010230
General Amman Telephones 623101
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53320
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53320

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/22
Custid Maternity, J. Amn. 642281/6
Alkhil Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mabhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4
Swedish Hospital 681931
University Hospital 845845
Al-Munster Hospital 667271/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Hafsa, Al-Mahajreen 777104/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 775112/26
Army, Maadi 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Aqaba Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09991071
Bn Shm Hospital 09986732
IRBID:
Princess Bama Hospital 02725535
Greek Catholic Hospital 02727275

Ibn Al Nadres Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

18:00 Damascus (RJ)
18:00 Soana (RJ)
18:00 Baghdad (RJ)
18:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
18:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
19:00 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
19:30 Cairo, Asmara (RJ)
19:45 Istanbul (RJ)
19:45 Cairo (RJ)
19:45 Tunis (RJ)
19:45 London (RJ)
19:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:55 Baghdad (IA)
10:20 Soana (LI)
11:05 Cairo (MS)
12:00 Baghdad (RJ)
13:30 Kuwait (RJ)
13:35 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
18:30 Paris (AF)
08:25 Baghdad (AF)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:30 Montreal, New York (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
13:45 Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
20:00 Kuwait (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:10 Baghdad (RJ)
21:15 Damascus (RJ)
21:50 Cairo (RJ)
21:45 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:15 Beirut (ME)
11:00 Baghdad (IA)
11:10 Frankfurt (LI)
11:50 Cairo (MS)
13:00 Istanbul (RJ)
14:00 Kuwait (RJ)
14:45 Bahrain, Sharjah (GF)
19:30 Baghdad (AF)
01:25 Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.
Almonds 550 / 580
Apple 480 / 440
Banana 430 / 400
Banana (Mekummar) 400 / 330
Beans 250 / 240
Broad beans 500 / 480
Cabbage 30 / 40
Carrot 160 / 120
Cauliflower 180 / 140
Cauliflower (large) 150 / 100
Cauliflower (small) 240 / 180
Dates 400 / 300
Eggplant 220 / 180
Garlic 900 / 450
Grapefruit 200 / 240
Lemon 340 / 280
Lettuce (per one) 150 / 180
Mallow (large) 320 / 280
Marrow (large) 80 / 40
Sage 180 / 140
Onion (dry) 250 / 240
Onion (green) 200 / 150
Orange 340 / 300
Orange (Shamoun) 380 / 340
Peas 300 / 250
Pepper (red) 480 / 340
Pepper (green) 300 / 250
Potato 320 / 280
Radish 150 / 180
Sage 450 / 400
Spinach 200 / 150
Tomatoes 340 / 280
Watermelon 280 / 240

Nicosia Charter signatories pledge to protect environment

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan was among 17 countries within the Mediterranean basin to sign the Nicosia Charter last week, paving the way for greater cooperation among the signatories to protect the environment and to fight pollution, according to Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Karim Al Dughmi who led Jordan's delegation to the meeting.

The Nicosia Charter endorsed declarations on the protection of the environment earlier approved by the Genoa and Barcelona meetings of 1985 and 1975, stressing the need for the protection of coasts, management of water and the proper disposal of waste and the protection of vegetation and forests," said Dughmi in a statement upon his return to Amman from the April 26-28 meeting.

The Nicosia Charter, he said, calls on the participating nations to adopt strategies that conform to economic and social development in the Mediterranean region and urges them to conduct an assessment of the implementation of national strategies biennially.

Jordan last year embarked on the implementation of a national environment strategy in cooperation with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources which helped to provide the Kingdom with more than \$300,000 as a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

On April 22, 1990 the Kingdom embarked on a Jordanian environment year during which work will be geared towards safeguarding the environment from pollution.

According to Dughmi, the



Abdul Karim Al Dughmi

Nicosia Charter has defined priorities which included special clauses that call on nations to adopt comprehensive plans for the disposal of industrial and toxic waste, controlling and monitoring the general environment situation, monitoring the coastal regions, increasing the process of exchange of expertise and information related to laws on the environment and transfer of technology, on environmental affairs and the rationalisation of energy resources.

"The Nicosia Charter calls on the countries of the Mediterranean region to treat waste water in urban and coastal areas and to define shores that had been exposed to pollution," the minister said.

He said the European Community, the World Bank and the European Investment Bank have all pledged to provide financial assistance to the concerned nations, and named the year 2025 for the implementation of national strategies in the Mediterranean

basin for protection of environment.

An earlier report from Nicosia said that the World Bank and the European Investment Bank would together provide \$1.49 billion to assist the littoral states' effort within the framework of the Nicosia Charter.

Part of the assistance will go toward the establishment of sewage facilities for 25 major Mediterranean coastal cities as called for by the charter.

The littoral states themselves have undertaken to provide such facilities for 75 other smaller coastal towns.

The charter also called for the creation of at least 25 controlled deposit sites to deal with toxic and dangerous wastes by January 1995, according to the report. It added that a consensus had been achieved on the necessity to mobilise all available resources in order to achieve by the year 2025 at the latest, a clear Mediterranean environment compatible with sustainable development.

The European Community, which organised the three-day conference, said it would do everything in its power for the implementation of the Nicosia Charter.

Dughmi was among eight ministers leading their delegations to the three-day meeting which endorsed an agreement to promote cooperation with the European countries and to adopt a unified position at the 1993 environment conference to be held in Brazil.

Representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme were among the delegates attending the meeting in Cyprus.

King Fahd emphasises strong ties with Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received a cable from King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia in reply to one he had sent the Saudi monarch upon the end of his visit to Saudi Arabia during which he had performed the Omra (the lesser pilgrimage).

In his reply cable, the Saudi monarch said he was delighted to have received King Hussein and his delegation in Saudi Arabia and the holy places and was pleased to have had meetings to discuss brotherly ties and issues

of concern to the Arab and Islamic World.

"I am pleased to emphasise Saudi Arabia's deep affection to the Jordanian monarch, government and people and hope that the Hashemite Kingdom will achieve further development and progress," said King Fahd in his cable.

The Saudi Monarch also expressed his good wishes on Eid Al Fitr, voicing his hope that the Kingdom will pursue further efforts towards progress under King Hussein's wise leadership.

Party official slams U.S. Congress' stand

AMMAN (J.T.) — A senior member of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party (JPDP) issued a statement here Sunday denouncing the U.S. Congress' endorsement of Israel's annexation of Jerusalem, making it the united capital of Israel.

Bassam Haddadin, who is also member of the Lower House of Parliament, said in a press statement distributed in Amman that the Congress' decision was a flagrant aggression on the Arab Palestinian people's rights and international legitimacy.

"The Congress' decision exposes United States' false claims that it upholds the causes of democracy, peace and freedom," said Haddadin.

He expressed confidence that the uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories will be maintained with greater determination to achieve

liberation of the Palestinian land and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

He said the fate of Jerusalem would not be decided by the Congress but rather by the struggle of the Palestinian people.

In his statement, Haddadin appealed to world parliaments and peace-loving nations to condemn the American decision as a hostile action directed against the rights of the Palestinian people.

Members of the JPDP, including Haddadin, were received in audience by His Majesty King Hussein last week for discussions on the influx of Soviet Jews to Israel and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The group, which met the King included also Hani Hourani, Salem Nahhas, Sameh Khalil, Abba Abu Ulla, Majda Al Masri Ahmad Yousef and Ali Amer.

Study focuses on Arab cooperation in labour

AMMAN (J.T.) — A study on scopes of cooperation and coordination between Arab countries in the field of labour was conducted by Ministry of Labour Secretary-General Saleh Al Khasawneh, according to a report published Sunday in Al Dustour Arabic daily.

The report said the study aims at finding scopes of cooperation between Arab states which export and import labour in order to rationalise and facilitate the transfer of the labour force between Arab and foreign countries

and utilise it in the best possible manner.

The study deals with several related topics such as labour markets in the Arab countries, the Arab labour immigration, labour policies in Arab countries and the legal framework for Arab cooperation, according to the report.

Khasawneh also dwelt on the economic and social aspects and variables which affect the volume and tendencies of employment and which call for more cooperation between countries in the region, the report added.

Ministry of Planning draws out socio-economic development plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The main features of the next natural socio-economic development plan were the subject of discussion at various meetings held recently at the Ministry of Planning, according to ministry sources.

The sources said that a special committee, comprising ministry officials had been formed to study the working papers and prepare proposals for the best methods of drawing up the plan.

The committee also discussed the optimal methodology for preparing the plan and means of implementing it and the ideal format for preparing the plan,

including the input of both the public and private sectors in the preparation process.

It also discussed the technical and administrative requirements for producing the plan document and capitalising on the advanced expertise in formulating economic, financial, monetary and commercial policies.

The sources added that the discussions also dealt with the participation of experts from the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) in the technical preparation for the plan, in implementation of the agreements already concluded among the ACC member states.

Union to include all Jordanian youth

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The preparatory committee of the Jordan Democratic Youth Union (JDYU) announced Sunday that the union will apply for legal registration this summer and open its doors for membership to all Jordanian youth regardless of background and/or political and cultural trends. The announcement came after three months of intense meetings and negotiations between different committees preparing similar unions for the youth who came to an agreement to join forces into establishing one union.

At a press conference held at Amman deputy Mansour Murad's office, members of the preparatory committee expressed the need for such a union that would include all young Jordanians with different political trends and independents that would work towards tackling and solving problems concerning the young in the Kingdom.

In a statement released by Murad — whose efforts were acclaimed by members of the preparatory committee as being successful in uniting the different committees in forming a single union — he said that the achievement of forming one union was important in representing "the ambitions and problems of the youth in our country."

"Only through representing all sectors of the youth can we build, deepen and protect democracy and achieve national unity," Murad said.

"The union is a (financially) independent body and belongs to no political party. It does not have a political structure but a political basis which is the continuation and development of democracy and public freedoms, and is against all forms of sectarianism and regionalism," explained Mohammad

Omran, a member of the preparatory committee.

The establishment of such a union is seen as a precedent for other institutions and organisations to unite their efforts in serving the Jordanian people.

"With the openness in the country, we hope that this union is a beginning for other organisations to become more public and united to include all sectors of society, to achieve more development for everyone," Nizar Kayed, a member of the preparatory committee, told reporters.

Sa'ud Qubailat, Khalid Khader, Nahed Hattar, Kayed and Omran, all members of the preparatory committee, said that the union aims at defending the rights and freedoms of all young Jordanians.

According to Qubailat, a similar union was established in 1974 under the same name, (in which he was the president of the executive committee) and was recognised by the Arab Youth Union (AYU) and the Prague-based International Democratic Youth Union (IDYU). But the previous union was recently dissolved to enable the formation of the new JDYU, which would still remain a member of both the Arab and international unions because of its name.

According to the internal policy of the union, the organisation aims at defending the youth's economic, social, cultural and political rights and providing opportunities to use their ability and talent. The union, described by the organisers as a "popular, national, democratic youth organisation," will also include participation in sports and cultural and social activities "in serving what is beneficial for the young."

Through minimum annual membership fees (JD. 3) and donations, the JDYU intends to issue specialised publications, including a regular

magazine, and concentrate on research aiming at solving the problems of the youth and developing the national culture.

The union will open its doors to all Jordanians between the age of 18 and 40 after its conference of establishment, scheduled in the summer. The members of the preparatory committee plan on opening branches in every city in the world where there are more than 30 Jordanian youth residing.

The other objectives of the union are:

— To follow up on the situation of Jordanians abroad and deepen their ties to Jordan by listening to their problems and following their activities within the branches.

— To coordinate with popular, professional and official sectors to develop the "positive morals" of the youth and to increase their commitment to the issues of the people and nation.

— To work toward solving the problems facing the youth, particularly unemployment, leisure, education, marriage.

— To work towards developing a "national education policy" and to provide just opportunities for all youth to receive a full education and solve the problems facing students during all phases of education.

— To develop the participation of women in the economic, social, political and cultural life, and abolish all forms of discrimination against them.

— "To face the dangers of Zionism/imperialism against Jordan and the Arab Nation."

— To support the Palestinians and the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories until the liberation of the land, "the right of return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state on their national soil under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Muslim scholars to hold seminar on holy places, Israeli practices

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dangers inherent in Soviet Jewish immigration into Palestine and the role of media in defending Arab Jerusalem will be among the main topics for discussion by nearly 100 Muslim scholars who will meet in Amman in the first half of June.

The gathering will be the first ever international seminar to be held in Jordan to deal with the affairs of the holy city and to discuss working papers and documents related to the history of the holy places, Al Aqsa Mosque, Islamic Waqaf and Islamic culture. The General Islamic Conference For Jerusalem (GICFJ),

which is organising the seminar, said the scholars and researchers will also review the ongoing Israeli authorities' practices against the Islamic Waqaf and holy places and Israel's attempts to Judaise the Arab city.

Papers dealing with Zionist fallacies concerning the ancient sector of the city, excavations under the holy Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, ways to confront Zionist settlements in Jerusalem and the dangerous effects of occupation on the city's social, cultural and economic life will be thoroughly reviewed during the

three-day meetings, according to the Amman-based GICFJ.

The Ministry of Waqaf and Islamic Affairs, which is co-sponsoring the meeting, said the participants would discuss the historic dimension of the city as an Arab and Islamic holy centre, its establishment and historic development.

Furthermore, it said the meeting aims to orient the Arab and Islamic public on the importance of the holy places for Arabs and Muslims and to keep its memory alive in the minds and conscience of the world community.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

King receives congratulatory cables

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received congratulatory cables from several heads of states congratulating him on the occasion of 'Eid Al Fitr, and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity. The cables came from the Saudi monarch King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud, U.S. President George Bush and Philippine President Corason Aquino. The King also received a congratulatory cable from the Saudi Crown Prince and the first deputy premier Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdul Aziz.

Abu Taleb meets Norwegian minister

AMMAN (Petra) — The Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb Sunday received at his office the visiting Norwegian Defence Minister Pierre Simons and the accompanying delegation. Abu Taleb and Simons reviewed the situations in the region and scopes of bilateral cooperation, in addition to issues of mutual interest. The meeting was also attended by the assistant to the chief of staff for administration.

Mayors of Arab cities hold meetings

CAIRO (Petra) — Greater Amman Mayor Ali Suheimat arrives here Tuesday to take part in the 14th meeting of the Organisation of Arab Cities and Capitals, due to be held in Alexandria on Wednesday. Mayors of Arab cities and capitals will discuss during the three-day meetings means of enhancing cooperation and coordination among their cities and capitals, in a bid to highlight the Islamic features of these cities.

Jordan, Egypt to boost cooperation

CAIRO (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Ziyad Fariz is due here Thursday on a several day visit to Egypt and for talks with Dr. Maurice Makramallah, Egyptian minister of international cooperation. Fariz, who will be accompanied by an official delegation, is expected to discuss the work of the joint Jordanian Egyptian holding company which carries out joint projects in Egypt and Jordan. In addition, Fariz will hold talks with other Egyptian officials dealing with economic and trade cooperation between Jordan and Egypt.

Play highlights Palestinians fate

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Culture Khalid Al Karaki Sunday opened the week-long children play (Al Shahid) which is now being staged at the Royal Cultural Centre. The play, prepared by the Jordanian Artists Association in cooperation with Amman National School, tells the story of the Palestinian people since the 1948 Israeli occupation of Palestine and reflects the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people. Taking part in the play are 41 children from Amman National School.

Parley on Mediterranean fever ends

AMMAN (Petra) — A two-day international medical symposium on the "Familiat Mediterranean Fever," held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Sunday reached an agreement on unifying means of research at the various research centres, in a bid to come up with integrated research. At the centres, in a bid to come up with integrated research. At the conclusion of their two-day meetings participants recommended the establishment of regional research and information exchange centres. The symposium chairman Abdullah Al Hiyari, chief medical officer at Hussein Medical Centre said the symposium discussed all the working papers presented to it as well as means of reaching at better and less toxic treatment of the disease.

Mafrag, North Shuneh to hold municipal elections

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 25 people are running for the 10-member Mafrag municipal council, which will be elected Thursday, according to a report in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily.

The report said 12,227 eligible voters would cast their votes at five polling centres, three of which are for women. Ten of the contestants belong to two blocks, namely the National Reform Bloc and the Work and Cooperation Bloc, while the remaining five are independent candidates.

To facilitate the election process, Mafrag governorate has taken all the necessary measures and has provided 22 polling boxes, including 12 boxes for women and appointed 11 committees for sorting votes.

The National Reform Bloc pledged to work towards serving the best interests of the citizens any discrimination, taking into account the economic circumstances the country is currently passing through.

The bloc also said it would open new streets, find solutions to health and sanitation problems, set up a new slaughter house, continue work on the sewerage project, support the youth and sports activities and provide support to women's activities.

The Work and Cooperation Bloc said it would work on the second and third phases of the sports complex, provide financial and moral support for the youth sector, set up a modern library and attract investors to set up projects in the governorate.

The bloc also pledged to construct streets, pavements and embankments for villages and towns lacking such things.

In North Shuneh in the north Jordan Valley district, 21 citizens are vying for the seven-member municipal council, which will be elected Saturday, according to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra.

A total of 5,235 voters will cast their votes through 10 polling boxes distributed between two polling centres.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

THEATRE

★ Children play in Arabic entitled "Al Shahid" (The Witness) at the Royal Cultural Centre — 4:00 p.m.



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Jordan Times advertising department.

Time is being lost

MORE than five weeks were wasted when Israeli Labour Party leader Shimon Peres tried to form a government. Now it is Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir's turn to waste more time trying to form a coalition. Meanwhile, the momentum for peace in the Middle East has been effectively lost. There is hardly a word being uttered these days about the Baker formula for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and before not too long it too will be unceremoniously dumped like all the other previous attempts to make peace in the Middle East. Of course, the massive Jewish immigration to Israel will continue unabated in spite of the vociferous Arab rhetoric, albeit in a more quiet way than before. And when Iraq made a legitimate response to the new dangers and challenges facing the Arab World, all hell broke loose and fury was unleashed against it by the Western World. Against all this, the Arab peoples must be at a loss to comprehend why all this official Arab hesitation to convene an Arab summit except to conclude that they wish to avoid standing up to these dangers and challenges. More than ever it is imperative now for the Arab leaders to get together and hold their much anticipated summit. It is inconceivable that the Arab leaders are waiting for Israeli rockets and nuclear bombs to fall over their heads before they make their collective move. Surely, it is clear to them that that peace process has been dealt a death blow for as long as one can see and the derailment of negotiations between Israel and the Arab side could sooner or later invite war and destruction to the region on a scale hitherto unknown to any of us. There must be something that the Arab countries can do to salvage the situation from utter despair and conflagration. The least that they can do in this vein is to sit down together and decide on something useful and effective for their countries and peoples.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

AL Ra'i daily on Sunday commented on the U.S. administration's display of hostility towards the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular. The paper said that following the U.S. Congress's endorsement of Israel's annexation of the city of Jerusalem, the Bush administration has now threatened to cut off all its contributions to the World Health Organisation, should the organisation admit the PLO to its membership. Both actions are part of a long series of American practices that clearly display the United States hatred to the Palestinian people, and both moves serve as part of the U.S. administration's encouragement for Israel to escalate its criminal actions in the occupied Arab lands, said the paper. There is no doubt that this kind of encouragement can result in further bloodshed, and Israeli killing of innocent people as happened on the first day of Eid Al Fitr in the Gaza Strip, the paper added. The paper expressed the view that not only did the U.S. administration show its determination to impede the peace process, but it also proved beyond any doubt that it is an accomplice to aggression against the Arabs and the Palestinians in such a manner that can only endanger world peace. The Arabs, said the paper, should give up any lingering hopes of any prospects for the United States to follow the path of justice in their region, and should be brave enough to develop their own intrinsic force, and together confront the danger represented in the U.S.-Israeli alliance and aggression on the Arab Nation.

Al Dastour daily on Sunday discussed Israel's expansionist policies in the occupied Arab territories and said that, encouraged by the United States, the Zionists are now consolidating their hold on Palestine and increasing their criminal actions against the Arab population. The paper noted in particular Israel's killing of demonstrators in Gaza last Thursday as the Palestinians were celebrating Eid Al Fitr. It said that the killing and the continued repression prove to the world the dimension of the crime being committed against the Arab people in Palestine, and show that Israel was determined to go ahead with plans to step up repression and increase its massacring of the Palestinians. What happened in the Palestinian camp of Jabalia last Thursday, the paper said, is part of a series of massacres committed by the Israelis over the past three years of the uprising, but it bore an indication that the coming months will witness further bloodshed, as Israel seems to be determined to confront the uprising by all means under its disposal.

Sawt Al Shaab daily discussed Washington's blackmail exercised against the United Nations, referring in particular to its latest threat of cutting off all U.S. contributions to the World Health Organisation should the latter admit the PLO as member. The paper noted that this was not the first time that Washington resorted to such actions in its dealings with countries of the Third World. The United States had pulled out from UNESCO after failing to impose its will on that organisation, and after the international community stopped Washington from meddling in UNESCO affairs, the paper noted. It said that the U.S. position vis a vis the PLO, although the latter had accepted all conditions for peace, proves that Washington is not oriented towards peace in any form or manner. Furthermore this latest U.S. attitude proves that Washington is indifferent to its own interests in the Arab World and does not give any regard to Arab feelings. Therefore, the paper said, the Arabs have no other alternative but to take a united stand regarding the American position and put an end to Washington's hegemony over the world organisations, and also end all U.S. harmful actions against Arab interests.

Mideast situation a surrealistic minuet; Jordan's agenda is a cry of conscience

By HRH Crown Prince Hassan

The following article is reprinted in full from the April 28-29 issue of the International Herald Tribune

AMMAN — An unprecedented opportunity exists for Israel to arrive at accommodation with its neighbours and to tackle the festering issues that have haunted our region for generations. Jordan, like other fair-minded Arab states, stands ready to seize the opportunity in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill.

As we enter the 1990s, the longstanding problems concerning Palestine, the occupied territories, Lebanon, the Gulf and economic development in the area seem nowhere near solution. Procedural matters seem to be an obsession with regional officials. The Middle East situation has become a surrealistic minuet.

Meanwhile, the opportunity for a genuinely lasting peace diminishes, and recedes, daily. An expanding fundamentalist Islamic movement, influential in Muslim societies from Southeast Asia to North Africa, may become active in the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza. Unless peace prevails, there will be a different kind of war to contend with. It will be a war not between nation-states but one waged against the nation-state, a war of attrition that aims to reduce national entities to their components.

And the only triumphant residue of such a war would be political and religious fundamentalism — Islamic, Christian and Jewish. The fanatical war, if unchecked, could extend from Cairo to Islamabad and beyond, bringing the ethnic Lebanonisation of our region. Make no mistake: The threat is real.

Jordan believes that for the peace process to succeed, both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation must offer practical options to their peoples. Jordan is committed to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The most appropriate vehicle for achieving this is an international conference under United Nations auspices.

We cannot afford to wait. The Arabs and Israelis must be induced to talk, and talk now. The Arab-Israeli conflict has inflicted heavy demographic and economic burdens on Jordan. We have also incurred financial burdens in our efforts to stabilise the situation in the Gulf. Our goal has been to check Iran's quest for hegemony over the region and its vital resources, and to contain the rise of religious fanaticism. The formulation of moderate policies and practical approaches, based on an Arab consensus, has long been a Jordanian national objective. Today, with few signs that the endemic problems of the region are moving towards an equitable solution, the "Jordanian agenda" has become a cry of conscience.

In the belief that a drastic jolt was needed to make the peace process viable again, King Hussein embarked in July 1988 on a fresh course to renew Palestinian responsibility for the liberation of its own homeland by severing administrative and legal links with the Israeli-occupied West Bank. That decision served to define an identity for Palestinians distinct from Jordan or any other Arab country, and positioned them to conduct international negotiations to secure Palestinian national rights.

Regrettably, Israel has not joined in the spirit of accommodation. Instead, it has chosen to shift attention from the crucial issue of peace — this time, to gather all its resources to welcome a new wave of emigration from the Soviet Union. This emigration provides a powerful case for Israeli expansionists to keep the occupied territories as a home for the new arrivals. The result is a threat to all peace initiatives.

Peace in the Middle East will remain elusive as long as Israel denies the existence of the principal aggrieved party in the dispute — the Palestinian people. Successive Israeli prime ministers have tried to deal

with the Palestine question through third parties. For several years Israel toyed with the "Jordanian option," and currently it appears to have appointed Egypt as surrogate. But it is neither Jordan's nor Egypt's responsibility to participate in this subterfuge. Nor should they, since it would signify their acquiescence to the denial of the Palestinians' fundamental right to national self-determination.

Peace presumes that the other party attempt a comparable transformation of attitudes, values and outlook. That is not the case here. Israel, under Yitzhak Shamir, is intent on squandering its opportunity, by refusing to accept the exchange of land for peace — the only acceptable basis for a just and lasting settlement — as embodied in U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for a withdrawal by foreign forces from the occupied territories, and which also implicitly recognise the existence of Israel as a sovereign state.

Confronted by growing Palestinian moderation, Israel has been engaged in an energetic attempt to frustrate Mr. Shamir's own proposal for elections in the occupied territories. But as Israel continues to deny the right of the PLO to represent the Palestinian people, the real purpose of the Israeli "elections" becomes clear: to drive a wedge between the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and their recognised leaders in the PLO.

The end of traditional Cold War confrontation has altered the strategic importance of the Middle East. While the superpowers must assume greater responsibility in expediting the peace process, Jordan has also advocated the concept of greater regional and interregional economic cooperation. Such cooperation would provide political stability and enhance the peace constituency in the Arab World.

Potential building blocks for this wider cooperation are evolving in the grouping of the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC, and the Maghreb states. The oil resources and revenues of GCC members continue to

be a major factor in the economic growth of the region. Another building block for wider political and economic cooperation is a relatively new grouping known as the Arab Cooperation Council, or ACC, which consists of Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and North Yemen. Our idea is to think in practical terms about common concerns, such as water, energy, transportation and telecommunications. After all, Israelis and Arabs share a common geography and a common history.

The development of a sophisticated long-term strategy is required. The Palestine question is susceptible to compromise. I believe that it is possible to accommodate both the political requirements of the Palestinians and the resettlement of Soviet Jews.

The United States, the Soviet Union, Europe and the parties concerned in the dispute must work in concert to generate momentum for peace.

Since the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories violate international law, the United States and European nations should predicate their subsidisation of the immigration and resettlement of Soviet Jews on Israel's freezing all settlement activity in the occupied territories. They can do much to ameliorate this difficult situation by increasing annual quotas for Soviet Jews to settle in their own countries.

For our part, Jordan renews its call for an Arab summit meeting to formulate a peace strategy that would safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and the security and stability of the Arab regional order. We also call for intensified consultations both bilaterally and among regional organisations.

And Jordan wishes to renew its call for an international peace conference under the auspices of the U.N. Security Council. Such a conference will be an appropriate forum to deal with the problem once other methods have been exhausted. We hold out both a challenge and an olive branch to the Israelis. Will they seize the opportunity for a lasting peace?

Weekly Political Pulse

Building on solid ground

By Waleed Sadi

WITH the advent of democracy in the four Arab countries that comprise the Arab Cooperation Council, there is an increasing call on the political parties in these countries to play their natural and logical roles in realising the kind of cohesion and unity among their countries. This assessment stems from the growing awareness that no genuine unity between these four states can ever occur by decisions from the top only. Grassroot involvement and support are basic features of any real effort to unite peoples and countries everywhere, and the ACC countries are no different. This phenomenon has been borne out by many historical precedents both ancient and contemporary. When rather than if the Arab leaders of Iraq, Egypt, Yemen and Jordan would involve their democratic processes in achieving the much talked about coordination, cooperation and eventual unity among them must be uppermost on the minds of these leaders and their respective peoples.

To be sure there are already embryonic political parties in practically all the four Arab countries that make up the ACC. In Jordan, major strides have been made on the road to greater democracy including the creation of political parties. The proposed national charter in Jordan is anticipated to spell out the terms of reference for Jordanian political parties that are projected to be created in the country. Egypt and Jordan already share common political parties that found expression in the Islamist movement. Iraq and Jordan also share common political parties that found expression in the Iraqi branch of Baath party. To be sure more parties are expected to be created in all the four Arab states. This is the time then to coordinate policy guidelines

among the four Arab countries on political parties with a view to harmonising their policies on common and shared political parties. This is the way of modern states and this is the only effective route to take and adopt if the ongoing efforts to unify the four Arab countries in question can be taken seriously. Most recently the two German states have resorted to measures to unify themselves by way of unifying some of their respective political parties. The German example can serve as a viable model for achieving Arab unification since in both situations the peoples involved are respectively the same.

The best way to go about realising this desired end is to have the respective parliaments of the respective Arab countries take the initiative in this endeavour. More channels of communications need to be affected between them as a prelude to greater harmony and coordination. Joint sessions of the four Arab countries' parliaments can also go a long way to achieving greater cooperation and coordination. The next step could take the form of inter-Arab political parties meetings to adopt common strategies and common guidelines. In this vein an ACC political party can be created with a view to concentrating on ACC issues and objectives. Such an all-out Arab party would have chapters in all the four Arab countries. Yet the principal concern in any and all such political parties is the assurances that they enjoy grassroot support and are created by the peoples of the four countries and for their peoples. This route would offer the sure way for realising a truly united ACC from top down and from down up as well. Anything less than that would simply be like building castles in the sand.

Gorbachev cites Arab rights

(Continued from page 1)

position of the United States. TASS said Gorbachev and Assad felt that the stand of the current U.S. administration was "even worse" than that of the former Reagan administration. "As a result, there is still no stimulus for the Israeli leadership to seek a real way out of the blind alley and it is behaving aggressively and in a challenging fashion," the agency said. The TASS report on the talks said the two presidents also discussed cooperation in the mod-

ernisation of the Syrian Armed Forces — largely supplied by Soviet weaponry. Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, in a separate meeting with his Syrian counterpart Farouq Al Sharaa, said Israel had not matched the good will shown by Arab states.

Assad turned from Moscow Sunday and an official Syrian statement called the visit a success and said the topics included Soviet help to modernise the Syrian Armed Forces.

Moscow, Vilnius edge towards compromise

(Continued from page 1)

were set to give an outdoor performance Sunday evening of Beethoven's ninth symphony. Landsbergis, a music professor, has adopted the piece as an unofficial anthem for the independence drive. The concert was organised after he said he wanted to send it to governments around the world as an appeal.

"Beethoven's symphony represents hope and freedom and victory," said a spokeswoman for the Lithuanian parliament's information bureau.

Cyclists also prepared to stage a mass ride to the parliament building to show their resolve in the face of the Kremlin's blockade of energy supplies which has left motorists stranded and forced lay-offs at many factories.

A joint proposal from French President Francois Mitterrand and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl Thursday urged Lithuania to suspend its laws

backing the independence bid. Gorbachev's spokesman said Saturday that Moscow did not insist on Lithuania rescinding its declaration and suggested that a freeze could pave the way for talks.

"The centre, Moscow, the president, does not insist on rescinding, denouncing the declaration of independence. What should take place is that they should not insist on its implementation," spokesman Arkady Maslennikov said.

Gorbachev and other senior Soviet officials had previously insisted that the clock had to be turned back to the day before the declaration.

Moscow is particularly alarmed about three laws passed after March 11. They would exempt Lithuanians from Soviet conscription, prepare to introduce identity cards and take over property claimed by the small pro-Moscow

Communist Party.

It is apparently these measures, not the declaration itself, which Moscow wants suspended.

The sanctions have crippled much of Lithuania's economy, sending shock waves through the other Baltic republics and the surrounding region.

Latvia has suspended petrol sales to private cars and Estonia, which has approved its own step-

by-step drive to independence, has vowed not to honour the Kremlin's transport blockade.

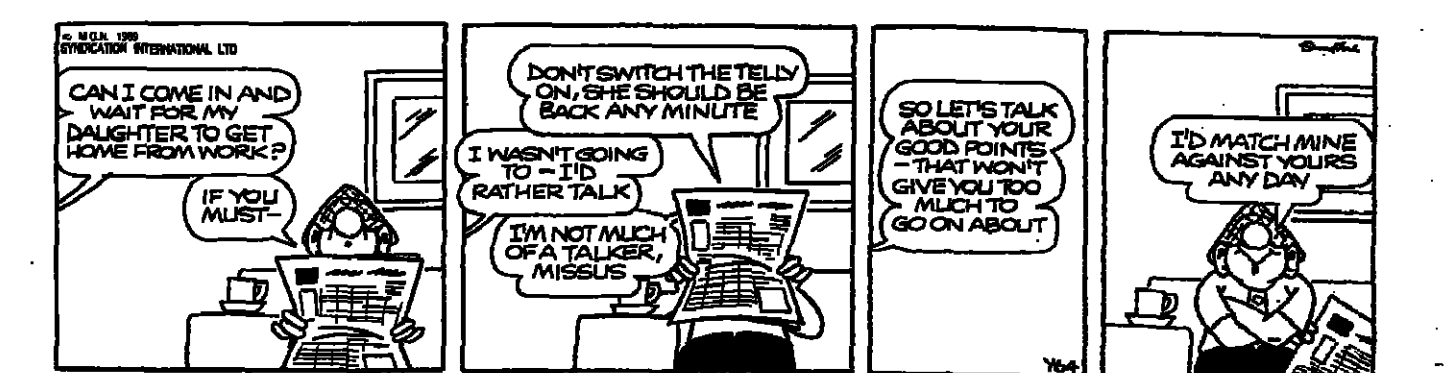
The embargo has also threatened to disrupt East-West ties, just over a month before the superpower summit in Washington.

In Latvia, voters in 17 districts were due to go to the polls to fill the last seats in the new parliament.

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New partnership on environment

By Philippa Neave

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Today, we are depleting the world's biological wealth at an ever-increasing rate, and the loss and degradation of the world's biological resources are taking a toll on the well-being of people in both industrialised and developing nations..." This grim warning appears in a recently published report of the Washington-based World Resources Institute (WRI). The study, which describes the erosion of the planet's plant and animal resources, adds that "an estimated 25 per cent of the world's species present in the mid-1980s may be extinct by the year 2015 or soon thereafter."

Biologists and scientists estimate that only 1.4 million of a potential 30 million species in the world have been identified. The fires and chainsaws that rage through the world's tropical forests, home to over half of all species, are eliminating plants and animals that we don't even know exist.

We have managed so far without these mysterious organisms, so why mourn their loss? There are plenty of reasons to be worried, argues Walter Reid, co-author of the WRI study, titled "Keeping Options Alive," because one cannot replace another. "All species have their niches," says the 33-year-old expert on biodiversity, citing the case of the sea otter indigenous to the cold waters of Alaska. Otters were ruthlessly hunted for their fur and became almost extinct. "This caused some fundamental changes in bottom level of the ocean. The sea urchin was the favourite prey of the otter; when it disappeared, there was no other mammal adapted to the area, so sea urchins went wild and started eating all the algae which other organisms fed," Reid explained in a recent interview.

In the way of Nature has planned things, all species, including man, are dependent on each other for survival. Picture a bird with a particular liking for the fruit of a specific tree. It eats the fruit, and in the course of its flight drops the seed, thus introducing the tree over a wide area. Kill the bird by destroying its breeding ground and the tree slowly begins to disappear.

That tree could have provided man with a valuable resource, such as a component for a curative drug. An example cited by Reid is that of the Rosy Periwinkle, a small flower indigenous to Madagascar, an island off the East African coast. "In the compound of its leaves, this plant has the cure for childhood leukemia and Hodgkin's disease. Before the compound was isolated, there was no known cure for leukemia; now the cure rate is up to 80 or 90



Co-author of a study on the depletion of the world's biological wealth, Walter Reid, points to a formerly endangered plant from Madagascar — the Rosy

Periwinkle — used to fight childhood leukemia and Hodgkin's disease (WNL photo)

per cent," he said. Another example is that of the widely available plant called Artemisia Annularis, which may produce a potential cure for malaria. This is particularly valuable because most strains of the malaria virus, which kills one million people every year, have become resistant to quinine, the only other known cure.

Adds Reid: "There is a tree from the Australian rain forest called Castanospermum. Say this tree has disappeared; would it be a problem? We'd never know, but it turns out it has a compound active against the HIV virus." The virus has been identified as the leading cause of AIDS.

By killing species, we are depriving ourselves of valuable sources of food as well as potentially precious medicines. "Human beings have used about 5,000 species of plants as food, but only 150 or so have entered world commerce," the WRI study points out. A wealth of crops traditionally grown by former civilisations have disappeared. Among them is a grain called amaranth, once cultivated by the Mayas in Mexico. Scientists are now studying ways to reintroduce the grain so that it can be added to the world's food stores. "This is potentially one of the most protein-rich plants around," says Reid.

Undiscovered or forgotten plant species are also valuable because they are the wild relatives of cultivated species and may prove resistant to diseases or pests that plague modern strains

of plants. The resistant genes could be bred into crops. Reid cited another example of a potentially valuable plant, a variety of wild corn found in Mexico. "This corn is perennial, so it might be possible to take the genes of this plant and breed them into our annual corn plant. That way you wouldn't have to replant corn every year," he explained.

Rapid ecological degradation around the globe is causing species to disappear at a rate of up to 150 a day. We are not just "borrowing from the future," as the WRI study says, we are stealing from it, because we are not going to be able to give back what we have taken.

Reid insists that the process is happening so fast that immediate, wide-ranging action must be taken. "Speed up the process of keying-out species and identifying new ones as quickly as possible. Put them in seed banks and zoos," he stresses. Although zoos, seed banks, botanical gardens and other protective measures can help save some of the world's biodiversity, ultimately the causes of environmental damage must be addressed.

Governments and institutions are increasingly aware that ecological degradation has become a direct threat to economic development. The World Bank, for example, now attaches protective environmental conditions to loans that it makes for projects such as dams, roads and coal-fired power stations. Jeremy Warford, senior adviser in the World Bank's environment department, explains the bank's major policy shift: "What we have done in the past is that we haven't really focused on the underlying causes of environmental degradation: all we've been worrying about is our projects."

Warford, 51, is responsible for a training programme for all economists in the World Bank on environment issues. In an interview at the bank headquarters in Washington, D.C., he stressed that the world's top policymakers are going to have to get involved. "The environment has to become integral to the thinking of policymakers and people working in the ministries of finance, planning and economics," Warford said. "The tools of economics are critically important if we want to bring about change. Economic

instruments have a massive impact on the way people behave, and therefore on the way they use resources."

Experts are now convinced that the key to enlisting the public's help is to persuade people that it is in their economic interest to do so. Reid cited the example of Rwanda, an African country that has learned to exploit nature without harming it. "Tourism is now one of the country's top currency earners. People are being charged something like \$150 an hour to go and view gorillas," he noted.

By World Bank estimates, the world's population will reach 6.2 billion by the year 2000 — almost double what it was in 1965. Population pressure is one of the foremost concerns of environmentalists, who fear that unless there is a significant change in environment management, the earth's capacity to sustain that many people will be greatly reduced.

On the positive side, international cooperation is taking shape: A new project launched under the aegis of the World Bank, the World Resources Institute, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources may bring some solace. The WRI study, co-authored by Reid and Dr. Kenton Miller of WRI and subtitled "The Scientific Basis for Conserving Biodiversity," is the cornerstone of a planned international campaign aimed at halting the destruction of species. The two-year project, called Biodiversity Strategy, will involve governments and private groups and will call on experts from the fields of economics, law, politics and sociology as well as biology.

Reid explained it as a three-pronged approach: "Save it, study it and use it." "The way to deal with a lot of ecological problems is to enable people to make a living and develop in a sustainable sense," he concludes. "You can't just put barbed-wire fences around national parks. What we want is to get nature and people to be mutually reinforcing. In some cases, it involves working with people rather than working with nature. Conservation is managing people" — World News Link Inc.

Television for the 'Valley of Uninformed'

By Claus Korff

COLOGNE (DaD) — West German TV, the ARD and ZDF channels, is extremely popular in the GDR. Stations receive mailbags full of viewers' letters from the GDR every day asking them to boost transmissions so they can be seen all over East Germany. Since power changed hands in East Berlin, GDR TV's news coverage has grown less ideologically motivated and is seen by more viewers, but people in the GDR are keen not to miss out on programmes from the West, which have always been more informative and been felt to be more credible.

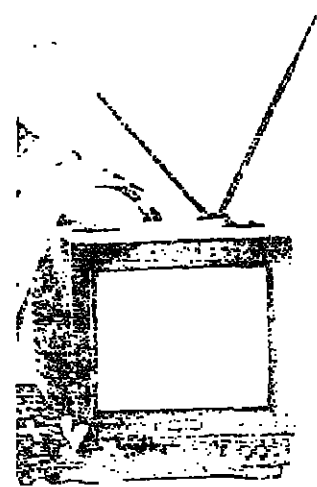
Tuning in to West German TV is no longer forbidden, but practical problems still arise. Reception is fine within 80 to

100 kilometres of the intra-German border. Most aerials in this part of the GDR are pointed west. But people who live further east need a dish antenna, which can cost up to 25,000 East German marks and is too expensive for most people in the GDR. In the Dresden area, in the Oberlausitz and in north-east Mecklenburg even a dish antenna is not enough. Reception is nil, and East Germans refer to people in these areas as being from the "Valley of the Uninformed" because they are unable to tune in to West German TV at first hand.

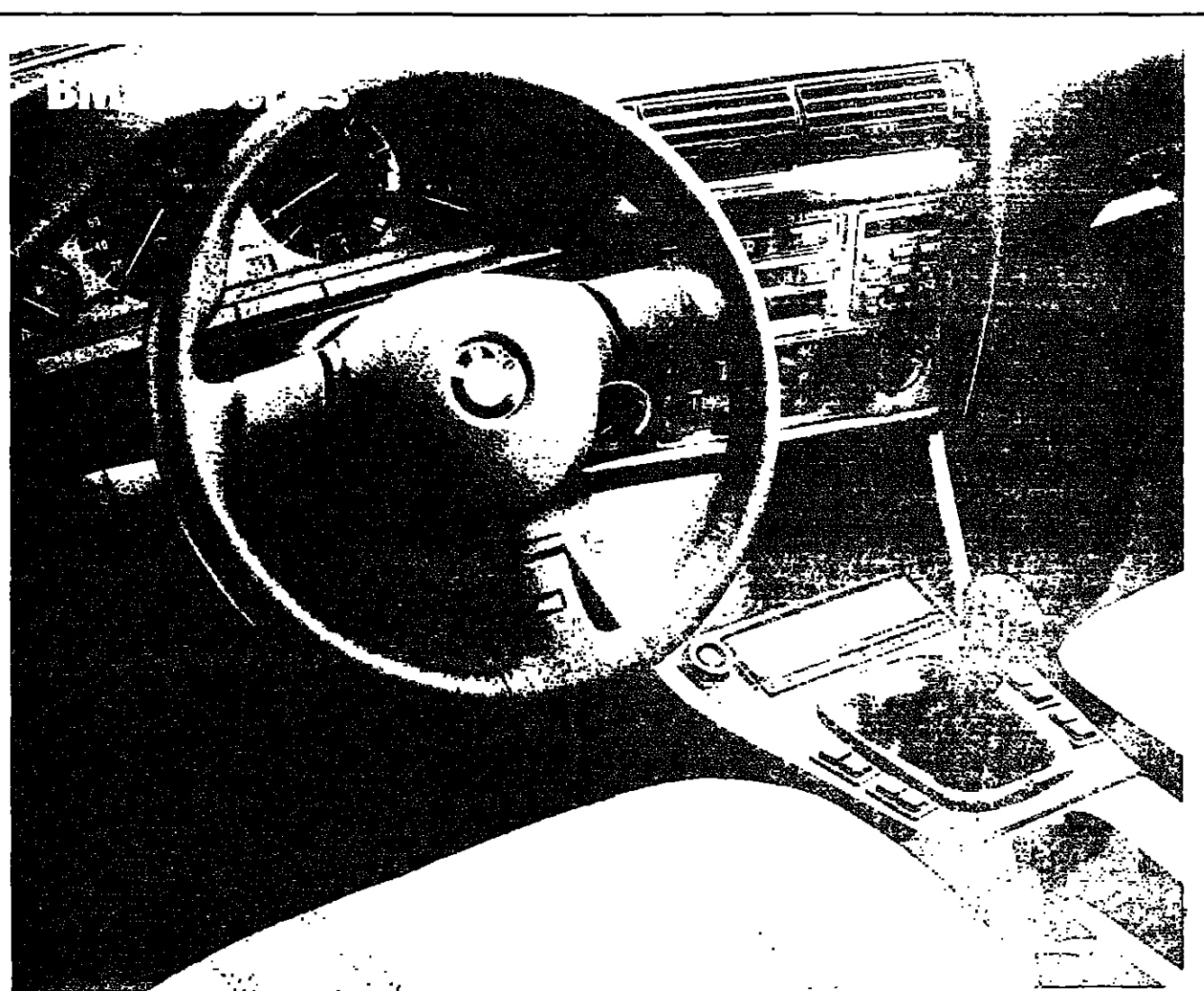
ARD and ZDF are keen to remedy this situation, and Telekom, the Bundespost's telecom services division, has the facilities. The range of transmissions can be extended via two new channels on the TV Sat 2 and

Kopernikus satellites. But satellite relay facilities are expensive: the TV Sat 2 channel costs DM17.3 million, its Kopernikus counterpart DM12 million a year. ARD and ZDF tend to clamour for higher licence fees when extra costs of this kind arise: viewers are understandably lacking in enthusiasm.

A commission comprising the heads of government of the Länder, the heads of the various TV channels and the management of Telekom must now opt for one of these solutions. A third, temporary option proposed by the Bundespost consists of directional radio from Berlin to booster and relay stations in Dresden and other parts of the GDR that have so far been "on the far side of the Moon" where West



German TV reception is concerned.



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The ultimate driving machine

The regreening of Vietnam

By Carmen Miranda

WHILE the destruction of tropical forests continues unabated throughout the world, Vietnam is busy planting millions of trees and attempting to recuperate land from the ravages of 30 years of anti-colonial and civil war.

LONDON: Fifteen years after the end of the Vietnam war, the Vietnamese government and people are engaged in a vast effort to re-green a countryside torn and wasted by 30 years of constant strife.

Nearly two million people died during the 10-year U.S.-Vietnam war. But the natural environment was also a victim. The country was sprayed with 72 million litres (15.8 million gallons) of herbicides and endured 13 million tonnes of bombs which created a staggering 25 million craters, apart from other environmental damage.

As the country rebuilt its bombed-out hospitals, schools, bridges, dykes and homes, it lost even more forest cover than during the war — cutting down twice as much forest land annually as it was planting.

Until recently, that is. Now a national committee consisting of 300 scientists is charged with the task of re-greening Vietnam. Dr Vo Quy, a leading Vietnamese environmentalist quoted in a book published this month — "Month of Pure Light: The Regreening of Vietnam" by Elizabeth Kemp — declares this effort the greatest challenge facing the country since reunification in 1975.

Current replanting, heroic though it is, does not yet keep pace with an annual forest loss of 200,000 hectares (494,000 acres). This is because Vietnam's efforts continue to be hampered by economic problems and the legacy of the war: unexploded mines and bombs are still a serious danger to farmers, foresters and field scientists; tonnes of military debris still

a serious danger to farmers, foresters and field scientists; tonnes of military debris still clutter vast tracts of arable land, and pernicious grass, dubbed "American grass" by the Vietnamese, has taken over millions of hectares of ruined forest and agricultural land.

Huge areas are still laid bare to the elements in a tropical country once covered in moist forest. Hills are still cracked wide open and heavy rains hurtle down through trenches now 10 to 15 metres wide, frustrating the efforts of planting teams to reforest the hillsides, even with obliging eucalyptus.

"In many areas, the earth has become as hard as brick, so we have to drive tanks over the ground to break up the soil," says Dr. Ha, director of Vietnam's Forestry and Planning Institute. "Lack of manpower in the outlying regions is one of the greatest problems we have to overcome," he says. "We have to mobilise people from other regions and encourage them to settle in areas which need reforestation. We cannot just plant trees and leave them. People must care for them to help them survive."

To put the country back on a sound ecological footing, the Vietnamese will have to increase the present 19 per cent of forest cover to 50 per cent by the end of the century, a process under way.

"I found that millions of trees had been planted," says Kemp. "In 1987, a record 500 million trees, representing 160,000 hectares (395,000 acres) were planted in a single year.

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Italian soccer:

Napoli takes league title

ROME (R) — Napoli took the Italian League title Sunday with a 1-0 win over Lazio and the southern Italian city erupted in celebration.

A seventh-minute Marco Baroni goal on the last day of the first division championship gave Napoli their second league title in four years.

Valiant AC Milan, ousted from the top of the table last week, scored four goals in 10 minutes in the second half of their match against Bari.

But their 4-0 win was not enough to close the two-point gap opened up by a resurgent Napoli.

The packed 85,000-capacity Naples stadium exploded in deafening cheers, drumbeats and fireworks as Diego Maradona's men, looking every inch a championship-winning side, dominated the match.

Maradona, looking slimmer than he has for years after shedding eight kilos in preparation for the World Cup finals in June, was the driving force of the team.

Napoli needed only to draw against middle-of-the-table Lazio to be sure of repeating their victory of 1987 when Maradona led the club to the first league title in their 60-year history.

But Maradona had promised that Napoli, who fought a neck-and-neck duel with northern rivals Milan for most of the season, wanted to end the championship in spectacular style.

The Argentine World Cup captain struck a free-kick which found Baroni unmarked a few metres outside the area and the Napoli defender headed past Lazio goalkeeper Valerio Fiori.

Maradona, supported by Brazilian forward Careca, set a fast and furious pace and the little midfielder was unlucky not to crown his efforts with at least two goals in his own right.

In the 20th minute, he fired a powerful shot which Fiori only just managed to get a hand to. And in the 70th minute, he hit a curling free-kick which Fiori again somehow saved.

Lazio fought back courageously and had their best chance just before the interval through a free-kick taken by Uruguay's Ruben Sosa which went over the bar.

"I think I can say after today's performance that we really deserved to win the title. I'm so happy I can't find the words to express myself," Napoli manager Alberto Bigon said.

Sanchez defeats Cueto

BARCELONA (AP) — Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain settled down after a shaky second-set start to defeat West German Isabel Cueto 6-4, 6-2 Sunday and log a hometown victory in the 5th Spanish women's international tennis championships.

Sanchez, the top seed in the \$150,000 tournament, held serve throughout the first set but faltered early in the second, ceding back-to-back breaks to Cueto, who qualified for the final with an upset over American Mary Jo Fernandez.

But Cueto, who appeared to hurt her left thigh early in the second set, failed to hold her serve even once, and double-faulted at break point to go down 2-3.

After that, Sanchez Vicario steadied her play, holding serve to go up 4-2, then holding again to win the set and match on the clay courts of the Royal Tennis Club.

Sanchez Vicario, a Barcelona native and one of the world's premier clay court players, earned \$27,000 for her triumph. Cueto was to take home \$13,500.

Cash wins Hong Kong singles, doubles titles

HONG KONG (AP) — Australian Pat Cash defeated Alex Antonitsch of Austria 6-3, 6-4 Sunday in the final of the \$210,000 Salem Hong Kong Tennis Open, winning his first tournament since an injury sidelined him eight months ago.

Cash fired nine aces in the one-hour, 20-minute match and scored repeatedly with strong attacks at the net that often left Antonitsch stranded on the wrong side of the court.

"To win here was beyond my expectations," said Cash, a wild card entry in the tournament. He collected \$26,000 first prize money. "He served well and returned well," said Antonitsch, who defeated Cash in the final of last week's Korean Open.

"I am disappointed to lose," said the 62nd-ranked Austrian, adding that he also was "disappointed I could not give the spectators a better final."

Later, Cash teamed with compatriot Wally Masur for a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Americans Kevin Curren and Joey Rive for the doubles crown.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNAB HIRSH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 954 ♠ 6 ♠ AQ1052 ♠ K873
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

Q.2—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ K83 ♠ A8763 ♠ A ♠ K732
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ AQJ8754 ♠ QJ5 ♠ 94 ♠ 2
In first seat, what action do you take?

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South

you hold:
♠ J53 ♠ 9872 ♠ Q7 ♠ KQ75
The bidding has proceeded:

East South West North
2 ♠ Pass Pass Pass Dbl
Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 8632 ♠ A5 ♠ AQ10 ♠ J652
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A54 ♠ AKQJ2 ♠ Void ♠ KJ75
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond? Look for answers on Monday.

Chesnokov wins Monte Carlo tournament

MONTE CARLO, Monaco (AP) — Andrei Chesnokov of the Soviet Union used timely rushes to the net to beat Austria's Thomas Muster, 7-5, 6-3, 6-3 Sunday and win \$1 million Monte Carlo Open tennis tournament.

Chesnokov won \$125,000 and Muster \$65,000, the biggest paychecks of their careers. The 24-year-old Chesnokov previously had won four titles, including one on the French Riviera last year in Nice.

The match started much the same way as Chesnokov's semi-final battle with Spain's Emilio Sanchez — a slugfest from the baseline.

The two made rare rushes to the net, splitting the first 10 games. Then as he did in the final set tiebreaker against Sanchez, Chesnokov's made more ventures to the net forcing his opponent into errors.

English soccer:

Forest shatters Oldham's dream of cup glory

By Alan Baldwin
Reuter

LONDON — Holders Nottingham Forest shattered second division Oldham's dream of English Football League Cup glory Sunday with a well-deserved second half goal from 20-year-old striker Nigel Jemson which decided the final.

Oldham, making their first Wembley appearance in their 95-year history, had their share of chances but failed to convert their undoubted skills into goals and lost 1-0.

After a first half marked by strong defensive work by both teams, Jemson gave Forest their second consecutive win with the lone goal in the 48th minute.

Nigel Clough, son of Forest manager Brian, sent Jemson weaving through the area with a beautiful pass that split the Oldham defence in two.

Oldham goalkeeper Andy Rhodes parried the shot but Jemson was hovering to pick up the rebound and shoot home. "Just to be at Wembley was an absolute dream. To get the winner is unbelievable," Jemson said.

He praised the performance of Oldham, who nearly reached two Wembley finals this season but lost to Manchester United in the F.A. Cup semifinals earlier this month.

"Oldham played very well. They were a credit to the club and played some great football," Jemson said.

Minutes after the goal, the Oldham goalkeeper was under fire again as a transformed Forest moved up a gear and burst forward in search of a second.

Rhodes dived for the ball on the edge of the area, bringing down Jemson, but appeals for a penalty were ignored in favour of a free-kick right on the line.

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NBA roundup:

Celtics, Pistons win playoff games

BOSTON (AP) — The Boston Celtics and Detroit Pistons both took 2-0 leads in their best-of-5 opening-round series with home-court victories Saturday.

Boston set single-game NBA playoff records for scoring and shooting accuracy in a 157-128 rout of the New York Knicks, while Bill Laimbeer led Detroit to a 100-87 win over the Indiana Pacers.

The defending champion Pistons will try to finish off the Pacers Tuesday night in Indianapolis, and the Celtics will go for their own sweep the following night in New York. If Detroit and Boston win their series, they'll meet in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Boston's point total Saturday broke the playoff record of 156 by Milwaukee against Philadelphia in 1970. The 285 points by both teams matched the postseason mark set in San Antonio's 152-133 win over Denver in 1983. The Celtics set another playoff

record by shooting 67 per cent from the field, topping the 66.3 by the Los Angeles Lakers against San Antonio in 1986.

"It was like a tidal wave," said Kevin McHale, who led Boston with 31 points.

Patrick Ewing, who had 28 points for the Knicks, said the Celtics "had it all clicking. They hit all the tough shots and made all the right plays."

Detroit broke open a game that was tied at halftime with a 26-9 spurt in the third period. The Pacers pulled within seven points several times in the fourth quarter, but Laimbeer, who finished with 22 points and 11 rebounds, and Isiah Thomas kept the Pistons safely in front.

Spurs 129, Nuggets 120
SAN ANTONIO — David Robinson had 31 points and 12 rebounds for San Antonio against Denver.

The Nuggets, who play host to the Spurs in game 3 of the best-

of-5 series Tuesday, trailed only 120-117 with 1:13 left. But a basket by David Wingate and two by Terry Cummings in the final minute put the game out of reach.

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Anti-apartheid priest wounded by letter bomb

ANC accused of 'appeasement'

HARARE (AP) — A white priest known as a longtime African National Congress (ANC) activist was critically wounded in a letter bomb explosion at his Harare home, church officials said Sunday.

The Rev. Michael Lapsley, a New Zealand-born Anglican priest, lost both hands in the blast late Saturday and was under intensive care in a hospital, a church spokesman said.

Lapsley opened the letter bomb at his rented house in central Harare. There were unconfirmed reports a second person was injured in the explosion.

The church spokesman, speaking on condition of anonymity, described Lapsley as an active ANC member who was reportedly on a South African "hit list" of exiled opponents.

"We are assuming South Africa is involved," he said.

In the past, the priest had received death threats from white South African extremists, and for the last three years he had been under police protection in Harare, the spokesman said.

Police refused to comment Sunday, and there was no immediate reaction from the Zimbabwe government.

Lapsley, in his early 40s, was

expelled from South Africa in the late 1970s because of militant activities against South Africa's apartheid racial system.

He settled in Zimbabwe and frequently travelled to the ANC's headquarters-in-exile in Lusaka, the capital of neighbouring Zambia.

Associates said Lapsley officiated at the funerals of several ANC sympathisers killed in bombing and sabotage attacks in black-ruled nations neighbouring South Africa.

The last bombing directed at the ANC in Zimbabwe was in January 1988, when one man died in a car bomb blast outside a house occupied by ANC exiles in the city of Bulawayo.

The incident Saturday is also the first bombing directed at an ANC member since the organisation was legalised in South Africa as part of political reforms announced Feb. 2 by President F.W. de Klerk.

The letter bombing came just days before ANC leaders, headed

by Nelson Mandela, are scheduled to meet with de Klerk for talks in Cape Town aimed at removing obstacles to constitutional negotiations. The talks are scheduled to begin May 2.

Meanwhile, a rift among black groups appears to be widening on the eve of groundbreaking talks between the ANC and de Klerk's government.

The discussions, scheduled for Wednesday through Friday, are designed to clear the way for negotiations on a new constitution that would include blacks.

But a militant group Saturday accused the ANC, the largest black opposition group, of "appeasement" for agreeing to negotiate with the white-led government.

"A sellout is very thick in the air," said Cunningham Nkomo, a general secretary of a union organisation affiliated with the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), a rival of the ANC. "Our choice is to fight on."

His comments came as some 3,000 supporters of the radical Pan Africanist Congress gathered in the Atteridgeville township outside Pretoria for the funeral of Pan Africanist leader Jeff Mase-mola.

Mase-mola, who died in a car crash two weeks ago, was freed in October from a life prison term after serving 27 years for sabotage.

The Pan Africanists Congress broke away from African National Congress in the 1950s and disagrees with the ANC on several tactical issues.

The Pan Africanists believe blacks should be self-reliant in their struggle for political rights, while the ANC embraces a "multiracial approach."

Both groups favour a one-man, one-vote system and wage largely ineffective guerrilla campaigns.

The ANC also is engaged in a power struggle in the southern province of Natal with Inkatha, a relatively conservative Zulu organisation. Fighting between the two sides has claimed 4,000 black lives in the past four years.

In other developments, police said a black policeman and his father were killed by gunmen.

Police said five gunmen broke into the house of 24-year-old Constable J.F. Zuma in Mpumalanga outside Durban Friday night, demanded ammunition, then shot him twice in the chest.

Reagan urges free elections in Cuba

MIAMI (AP) — Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan has called for free elections and democratic reforms in Cuba, speaking in address broadcast live to the island nation on the U.S.-funded Radio Marti network.

"Test yourself in a vote, Mr. Castro. Let the voices of the Cuban people be heard," Reagan said. "In the sanctity of the secret polling booth, the voice of freedom triumphs."

Reagan's 30-minute speech to a predominantly Cuban audience of about 10,000 in a Miami stadium capped a rally attended by dozens of dignitaries. Among them were Cuban-born U.S. Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and President George Bush's son Jeb.

Many Cuban leaders credit Reagan with launching a pro-democracy campaign against Fidel Castro's rule that they hope will allow the return of thousands of exiles.

"I believe we will soon be singing to liberty and independence in Cuba," said Jorge Mas Canosa, chairman of the Cuban-American National Foundation and an early supporter of the 5-year-old Radio Marti programme.

Canosa said the rally and speech was the first event broadcast live to Cuba via Radio Marti.

Foundation spokeswoman Marilyn Kalusin said Reagan spoke free of charge.

Reagan praised both Radio Marti and the new TV Marti network as instrumental in building grassroots opposition to Castro.

"This is an authentic breakthrough in U.S. information programmes because it is television that holds such promise and potential: The power of pictures, the visual images of freedom that are sweeping the world," said Reagan.

They will see the Berlin Wall coming down, the last speech of Romania's dictator, the Soviet citizens massing by the thousands in front of the Kremlin in support of broader democracy in the Soviet Union.

The Cuban government has jammed the TV Marti signal since its first broadcast on March 27. Earlier this month, Radio Marti was also jammed for the first time since it went on the air. Both the radio and television stations are named after 19th century Cuban independence hero Jose Marti.

Aquino predicts collapse of Communist rebellion

MANILA (R) — President Corason Aquino said Sunday that the Communist insurgency in the Philippines was headed for collapse and called on the guerrillas to surrender.

"The signals are clear. We are seeing here the telltale signs of a moribund movement, an organisation that has lost its cause," Aquino said in her weekly radio programme.

More than 4,000 Communist regulars surrendered and turned in 2,000 guns to the government in 1989, the president said, citing Defence Department statistics.

She said killings by Communist squads called "sparrows" were down 30 per cent.

Aquino, who has vowed to defeat the 21-year-old insurgency by the end of her six-year term in 1992, said the collapse of the Philippine Communist movement was being accelerated by Eastern Europe's rejection of Communism.

"The burial of this ideology on the trash heap of history has begun," she said.

Military officials said the strength of the Communist New People's Army (NPA) fell from a high of 25,000 people in 1987 to 18,500 by the end of last year. The number of districts under Communist control declined 25 per cent.

The rebels said in recent statements that they were growing in strength and could seize power within a decade.

Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos said last week that the guerrillas remained a long-term threat because they had a political machinery and a strong propaganda network, and were obtaining funds from foreign sources.

But Aquino said popular support for the guerrillas had evaporated because rebels used force to collect money and burned the homes of those who refused to support the insurgency.

"Our people have grown tired of the violence inflicted by Filipinos against fellow Filipinos. The people who nursed the NPA at its infancy are the very same people who now advocate the cause of progress through peaceful means," Aquino said.

Meanwhile Communist guerrillas ambushed government troops crossing a river in the southern Davao del Sur province, killing 15 soldiers, the military said Sunday.

Seven other soldiers of the 37th Infantry Battalion were seriously injured during Saturday's rebel attack in the mountain village of Lepanto in Santa Cruz municipality, 980 kilometres southeast of Manila, the military said.

A military spokesman, Maj. Ernesto Amboy, asserted that five members of the NPA also were killed. But he said no bodies were found.

Amboy said the incident occurred Saturday morning when guerrillas fired from an embankment at troops crossing the river below. Some soldiers returned fire but others threw down their weapons and fled, survivors said.

Sgt. Edwin Manresa, who was wounded, said the rebels carted away slain soldiers' rifles.

The ambush was one of the fiercest in the southern and central Philippines in recent weeks. On April 18, rebel and government forces clashed in Marikina municipality in Surigao del Sur province, killing 22 people.

A year ago a march on Washington by a record 300,000 people who urged the supreme court not to roll back its 1973 landmark Roe vs. Wade decision that guaranteed women the right to choose abortions.

Although the high court last June upheld a Missouri law to restrict abortion rights, "pro-choice" activists have won several political and legal victories in other states, including passage in Connecticut Friday of a bill that guarantees abortion rights regardless of any supreme court decision.

As part of their war, which has killed more than 250 people, the drug barons have targeted politicians and officials who oppose them. But officials say the traffickers' ultimate aim is to undermine democracy and erode public confidence in the government's anti-drug policy.

Western diplomats say that if one more presidential candidate is assassinated the government could be forced to postpone next month's elections.

With drug-traffickers, right-wing death squads and leftist guerrillas on the loose, Colombian presidential candidates know theirs is among the most dangerous jobs on earth. At public appearances they are escorted by a squad of anxious bodyguards, guns out and fingers on the trigger.

Pizarro, a former guerrilla leader, often wore a bulletproof vest and was guarded on last week's flight by a dozen bodyguards including some from his M-19 Movement and others from the security police.

But they were of no use when a 21-year-old gunman took out a submachine gun and fired 13

shots into Pizarro's head a few minutes after his plane took off from a Bogota airport. The gunman was immediately shot dead.

Opposition Social Conservative presidential candidate Rodrigo Lloreda accused the government Saturday of bias in its security arrangements for candidates. He said Gaviria was provided with armoured-plated cars and air force planes "while the public square is closed to other candidates."

Thirteen candidates are taking part in the polls but only three are given any real chance of winning — Gaviria, Lloreda and Alvaro Gomez of the right-wing Movement for National Salvation.

The M-19 Movement buried its assassinated leader Saturday and named a new candidate for May 27 elections.

Pizarro's second-in-command, Antonio Navarro Wolff, said he would replace Pizarro as presidential candidate.

"I accept so that peace is possible in Colombia...so that a new movement of popular forces can be formed and turned into an alternative for power," said Navarro, a 41-year-old engineer and former guerrilla who lost a leg in a grenade attack on a restaurant in 1985.

economy, and that is not yet forthcoming.

Last year Washington blocked a plan worked out between the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which would have enabled Vietnam to pay off its debts and clear the way for new IMF, World Bank and Asian Development Bank loans.

Ho Chi Minh City was reminded of the underlying weakness of the infrastructure this month when low water levels at the main hydro-electric plants that serve the South cut power to the city for three days a week in the hottest period of the year.

While agriculture, in particular rice-production, has responded well to the reforms, industry is devastated.

In a country of 65 million people at least seven million are unemployed as state factories, starved of the subsidies that kept them staggering unproductively on, lay off their workers.

Both conditions, the Vietnamese say, depend on subjective assessments by the United States.

Diplomats say U.S. compliance is needed to generate the big sums of money necessary to work a real improvement in Vietnam's

COLUMN 800001

Bardot to host TV show about animals

PARIS (AP) — Brigitte Bardot, the one-time screen sex kitten turned animal activist, is emerging from seclusion to be host of a four-part TV show about animal abuse. Bardot said she was "tired of fighting windmills," but decided to do the series anyway.

The first part airs on May 2 and deals with trafficking in animals. Bardot told a news conference she hadn't decided what animal causes the other three episodes would address: "There are so many (things) to denounce that we have difficulty with a choice."

The first show will take viewers to warehouses near Bangkok, 200 in the Congo and hangars at Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport. Since retiring from movies, Ms. Bardot has devoted herself to saving animals, most notably baby seals. She conceded that past efforts, like a TV series last year on animal rights, did little to improve the animals' lot. "If there's no response this time, we'll try to bring down the government," she said with a laugh.

Italian car fetches record price

LONDON (AP) — A 59-year-old Bugatti Royale has become the world's most expensive car, drawing a price of more than \$9 million (\$14 million) from a group of Japanese businessmen. The 3-ton luxury saloon — one of only six of its kind in existence — surpassed the previous record price of 8.5 million pounds (\$13 million) paid last November by a Japanese buyer for a 1963 Ferrari GTO. The Sunday Times of London reported. The Bugatti type 41 Royale cost \$65,000 (then \$22,300) when it was built in 1931. Its last owner was Hans Thulin, a Swedish real estate developer. The Sunday Times said the sale was confirmed by Nicholas Harley, a London dealer in vintage cars, who negotiated the deal through a Swiss bank. The buyers were not identified.

Chorus Line closes to tears, cheers and applause

NEW YORK (R) — A Chorus Line, Broadway's longest-running show, closed Saturday night and its 18 dancers took their last bows to tears, cheers and a thunderous 20-minute standing ovation. After 15 years and 6,137 performances, the dancers kicked their legs up for the last time on the white stripe that stretches the length of the stage before an exuberant audience that packed Broadway's Shubert Theatre. "It's so sad. It's like your mother died or something," said Deborah Henry, a cast member from 1976 who was in the audience. "It was just..."

Producer Joseph Papp, who announced the names of all the current cast members and the current cast from the July 25, 1975 debut, told the emotional audience: "This show is dedicated to anyone who has danced in a chorus or marched in step anywhere." As Papp called their names, dancers ran to the front of the stage yelled out to friends and relatives in the whistling and cheering audience. After the house lights came on, original cast members who were older and a little greyer reunited onstage, crying, taking photographs and recreating old dance steps.

Quakers object to Popeye ads

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania (AP) — "I am what I am," says Popeye the sailor man, but the peace-loving Quakers don't like his brawling ways and object to the use of the cartoon character in ads for Quaker oats. Not only that, too, but Popeye is too submissive, say members of the religious society of friends, better known as the Quakers, a longtime champion of women's rights. Popeye began popping up last year in TV commercials and in comics inserted in instant oatmeal packages, dispatching his nemesis Bluto with a swift swing of an oversized forearm. "I eat oatmeal and I'm stronger than steel," he sings to an adoring Olive Oyl. Elizabeth Foley, spokeswoman for the Philadelphia yearly meeting, the biggest Quaker group in the east, said Monday, "They had Popeye resolving dispute and conflict through violence. This is completely obnoxious and offensive. We are an organisation of pacifists. We have a peace testimony that is more than 300 years old," she said. "To portray us as a church that beats up on other people is not OK."

Pakistan rejects Indian warning over Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (R) — A senior Pakistani official, reacting to a tough Indian warning over Kashmir, accused India Sunday of making false assertions and using incoherent language.

"I regret that India should have repeated its bellicose statements so soon after the foreign minister and his Indian counterpart agreed to exercise restraint," the Foreign Ministry official said in an interview.

"I express our deep disappointment at this statement that is full of false assertions and incoherent language."

India said Saturday it would do whatever was needed to halt alleged infiltration by Muslim

milicians from Pakistani-controlled Kashmir into its Jammu and Kashmir state.

Indian government spokesman Aftab Seth repeated New Delhi's charge that Pakistan was directly involved in arming and supporting a Muslim rebellion in Indian Kashmir that has killed more than 300 people since January.

"We rule out nothing," he said when asked if India might strike across the ceasefire line that divides the two armies in the mountains of Kashmir.

Seth's statement came four days after Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan met his Indian counterpart Inder Gujral in New York, where the

two agreed to ease tension over Kashmir.

Pakistan denies involvement in Jammu and Kashmir and says the revolt is an internal movement in India's only Muslim-dominated state. It says it is powerless to stop militants slipping back and forth across the porous ceasefire line.

"I regret that instead of addressing the root causes of the problem, India is just subjecting the people of Kashmir to heinous atrocities," the official said.

"Instead of whipping up a war psychosis and sabre-rattling, India should align itself with the international community which wants a peaceful solution."

Charge and countercharge from the two capitals have fuelled fears of a fourth Indo-Pakistan war.

Seth said his statement was a response to a Yaqub Khan news conference in New York after the talks in which he accused India of "unspeakable crimes" in its efforts to crush the Kashmir revolt.

The Pakistani official said Yaqub Khan had shown great restraint and was doing nothing more than restating Pakistan's position that Kashmir is a disputed territory whose people should be given a chance to choose their own future.

Humberto Ortega should leave soon — UNO leader

PANAMA CITY, Panama (AP) — Leaders of Nicaragua's new government do not expect to keep the Sandinista's military chief in that post for long. Vice President Virgilio Godoy said Saturday.

Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who was inaugurated Wednesday as Nicaragua's president, decided to retain Sandinista military chief Humberto Ortega over the protests of members of her United National Opposition (UNO) coalition.

"We believe that although (Ortega) has been confirmed in the position, it will actually be for a short time," probably only until June 10, Godoy told reporters.

Godoy, president of the Nicaraguan Independent Liberal Party and a leader in the 14-party UNO coalition, arrived in Panama Saturday for an international congress of liberal parties. He did not explain why he believes June 10 could be Ortega's last day in charge of the army.

But, Godoy said, "we have pointed out that he is a point of friction because he is seen as a

spectre of war and violence, and generates very strong reactions."

Chamorro, in a gesture of national reconciliation after a bloody civil war, named herself defence minister and re-appointed Ortega as armed forces chief after he renounced his post in the nine-member Sandinista Party Directorate.

The decision split her coalition just as her administration took office.

"This has been a difficult decision for President Violeta de Chamorro, that I personally respect, although I don't agree with it," Godoy said.

He added that Nicaragua faces a vicious circle in which "the people of the (contra) resistance have said they are not disposed to disarm as long as Ortega remains, and Ortega says he's not disposed to leave as long as the resistance remains."

What Nicaragua needs now, after 10 years of war between the U.S.-backed contras and the Sandinista government, is demilitarisation, he said.

Police resume duty as calm returns to Kathmandu

KATHMANDU (R) — Mutinous Nepalese police, who stopped work after mobs killed eight colleagues, resumed rounds Sunday as heavy rains and a strict curfew restored calm to Kathmandu after weeks of often-violent pro-democracy protests.

Home Minister Yog Prasad Upadhyay told Reuters law and order in Nepal had "greatly improved" and the army-enforced dusk-to-dawn curfew in the capital could be lifted within days.

Heavy seasonal rains drenched Kathmandu, dampening the ardour both of pro-democracy activists and of supporters of the previous partyless system.

Nepal's absolute monarch, King Birendra, scrapped the Panchayat system this month after weeks of pro-democracy and appointed a reformist government to introduce multi-party democracy into his Himalayan kingdom.

Police sources confirmed that Kathmandu's policemen were back at work. Many of the 7,000-member force had stayed away in anger after mobs beat eight of their colleagues to death during demonstrations last Monday.

Public resentment towards the police, who shot dead at least 50 people during pro-democracy demonstrations on April 6, erupted during Monday's protests in which police also killed three demonstrators.

At funerals for the dead policemen the next day, hundreds of

policemen called for revenge and chanted slogans supporting the previous government.

"The expression of anger seen Tuesday during the funeral procession of the slain policemen was a momentary one," said one police officer who declined to be identified.

Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai's government has now started replacing some of the more mutinous policemen from the capital with police from remote districts, police sources said.

At the same time, many pro-democracy activists have formed vigilante groups to deal with crime and assaults by hardline supporters of the old Panchayat system.

"Once coordination between local vigilante groups and police units is established, hopefully in a day or so, the curfew orders will be lifted on a permanent basis," Upadhyay said.

Bhattarai's efforts to win control of Nepal's administration were boosted Sunday when three former prime ministers and the former speaker of the Panchayat issued a statement of support.

"The foremost need of the hour is immediate restoration of peace and security," the statement said.

"There is no reason why the organised strength of activists of the previous political system cannot be targeted towards peace, security and democracy."

Chinese official exposes confessions by torture

PEKING (R) — Chinese police torture prisoners to extract confessions, killing or wounding many of their victims, a senior law enforcement official has revealed in an unusual report on abuses of police power this year.

China had investigated 2,900 cases of "perverting justice for bribes, extorting confessions by torture, illegal detention and neglect of duty" from January to March, deputy chief procurator Liang Guoqing was quoted as saying Saturday.

More than 490 "major" cases involved "deaths and injuries as well as serious economic losses," Liang said, quoted by the New China News Agency (NCNA).

Liang reportedly told a news conference that dealing with such cases had helped protect "Chinese citizens' democratic rights" and build an honest government.

His report appeared to be the first official confirmation of widespread accounts of beatings and torture inflicted on prisoners after crackdowns on last year's Democracy Movement and Tibetan independence protests.

In Geneva Friday, the United Nations Committee Against Torture asked China to provide more details of measures it says it had taken to stamp out torture in prisons.

The committee of 10 independent human rights experts told China that charges of ill-treatment of prisoners were so widespread they could not be considered isolated incidents.

China ratified the U.N. convention against torture in 1988. A Chinese legal expert attend-

ing the Geneva meeting said reports of torture in Chinese jails were "rumours and gossip".

Prisoners recently released from Chinese jails have described how electric prods, beatings, prolonged periods of isolation and sexual abuse of women are used to punish and extract confessions.

The U.N. committee chairman, Michel Voyame of Switzerland, said a report presented by China was too vague and brief.

"We want to know what measures are being taken to prevent torture and to punish those responsible," he said.

It was not clear whether Liang's report was made in response to the Geneva meeting.

Sections of Liang's speech dealing with corruption were reported in official Chinese newspapers but not his remarks on torture or other abuses of power by police.

China's carefully controlled media have only rarely in the past admitted to cases of police torture.

A separate report by NCNA said 253 policemen and women had died in the course of duty last year.

It did not say how many had been killed on June 3 and 4 when the army and police opened fire on pro-democracy demonstrators in Peking, killing hundreds of civilians.

In his report on China's anti-corruption drive, Liang revealed that police had arrested Cao Bin, a senior official in the Communist Party's Propaganda Department, and still investigating the deputy minister for railways, Luo Yunguang.

15 years after the war, Vietnamese want Americans back

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (R) — Fifteen years after driving the Americans out of South Vietnam, the Communist government and the people want them back.

Not, of course, as rulers or political allies — that era ended on April 30, 1975 when northern tanks smashed through the gates of the Saigon presidential palace to end the war.

In a year when the leadership is hanging out the red banners to celebrate the 100th birthday of the late founder of the Communist state Ho Chi Minh it is not wise to publicly question the total commitment to independence and socialism.

But the collapse of Vietnam's ideologically-based support from Eastern Europe and, to some extent, Moscow, has added pressure on the government to secure an end to the devastating economic embargo imposed by the United States for 15 years.

For the people, especially in

the more free-and-easy South which has never embraced the austere Communist model of "Uncle Ho," it is Uncle Sam and his greenbacks who play the tune they want to hear.

On the streets and in the blossoming nightclubs they dance to its disco beat in blue jeans, sneakers and T-shirts decorated with glib English-language slogans of a distinctly non-Asian culture.

Economic reforms allowing private factories, trading and services, which were prompted by stagnation and looming starvation in the mid 1980s, have transformed the face of Ho Chi Minh City, the former Saigon.

In the bar of the Majestic Hotel on the Saigon River American hits of the early 1970s hammer out and young girls in heavy make-up linger at the door. "This is a new Vietnam," says a female cashier.

But Vietnamese economists and Western diplomats say it is a

superficial glitter, that the presence of colourful Chinese toys, Thai jeans, Indonesian beer, and Japanese televisions and even the new street bustle may be a fragile phenomenon.

A trishaw driver labouring in the sweltering heat tells his passenger he was a marine in the South Vietnamese army before it finally collapsed.

He says he can barely feed his family and he wishes the Americans could come back — reflecting a general nostalgia for a time of bountiful life handouts and laissez-faire lifestyle.

In Hanoi recently a man in his 20s was asked what he thought the reaction would be in Vietnam if Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev paid a visit.

He thought for a moment. "Not much," he said. Then his eyes lit up as he thought of a much more intriguing possibility. "But if George Bush should come..."

President Bush has no such plans and nor, his diplomats in Bangkok say, does he have any thought of easing the ban on trade and economic help which is observed by many Western states and, perhaps most harmful of all, by Japan.

Still smarting from its humiliating defeat in the war, Washington sees far more pressing areas for its interest than the stubbornly Communist Vietnam.

It says it will not lift sanctions until it is satisfied by Hanoi's cooperation in finding the remains of more than 1,000 U.S. servicemen still missing in action and Vietnam shows flexibility in the search for a settlement in Cambodia